DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 401 907 IR 056 182

TITLE	Entering the 21st Century: California's Public Libraries Face the Future.
INSTITUTION	California State Library, Sacramento.; Institute for the Future, Menlo Park, Calif.
SPONS AGENCY	Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Apr 96
NOTE	141p.
AVAILABLE FROM	California State Library, Library Development Services Bureau, P.O. Box 942837, Sacramento, CA 94237-0001.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Access to Information; *Change Strategies; Computers; *Futures (of Society); Information Management; Information Needs; Library Cooperation; Library Development; *Library Funding; Library Planning; *Library Role; *Public Libraries; Social Change; State Libraries; *Strategic Planning; Technological Advancement; User Needs (Information)
IDENTIFIERS	*California

ABSTRACT

California's public libraries face a decade of challenges, a decade in which the majority of Californians will become regular and adept users of electronic information resources, the majority of Californians will have many and varied ethnic backgrounds, a growing proportion of young people will live in homes where English is not the primary language, and public libraries will be forced to compete for direct public funding with a myriad of other social claims. This report, the result of a year-long research project, is designed to help California's public librarians and other stakeholders think about the critical social and technological transformations affecting all Californians and to help them redefine the role of public libraries in light of these vast changes. The report has four main sections: (1) "Critical Issues for California's Public Libraries," a review of the most important issues that will affect California's public library services in the next decade; (2) "A Vision for California's Public Libraries," a vision of a public library in the year 2005; (3) "Strategic Choices for California's Public Libraries," a review of the major strategic choices for addressing the issues and realizing the vision, including partnering with community and other organizations, developing new information and technology resources, and reorganizing for the 21st Century; and (4) "Planning with a Local Library: Woodland Public Library," a case study of a prototypical detailed strategic planning process with one local public library based on all the information gathered in the study. Two appendices describe the scope and methodology of the study, and present a list of tables and figures. (Author/SWC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

IR

ED 401 907

Entering the 21st Century:

California's Public Libraries Face the Future

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
● Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

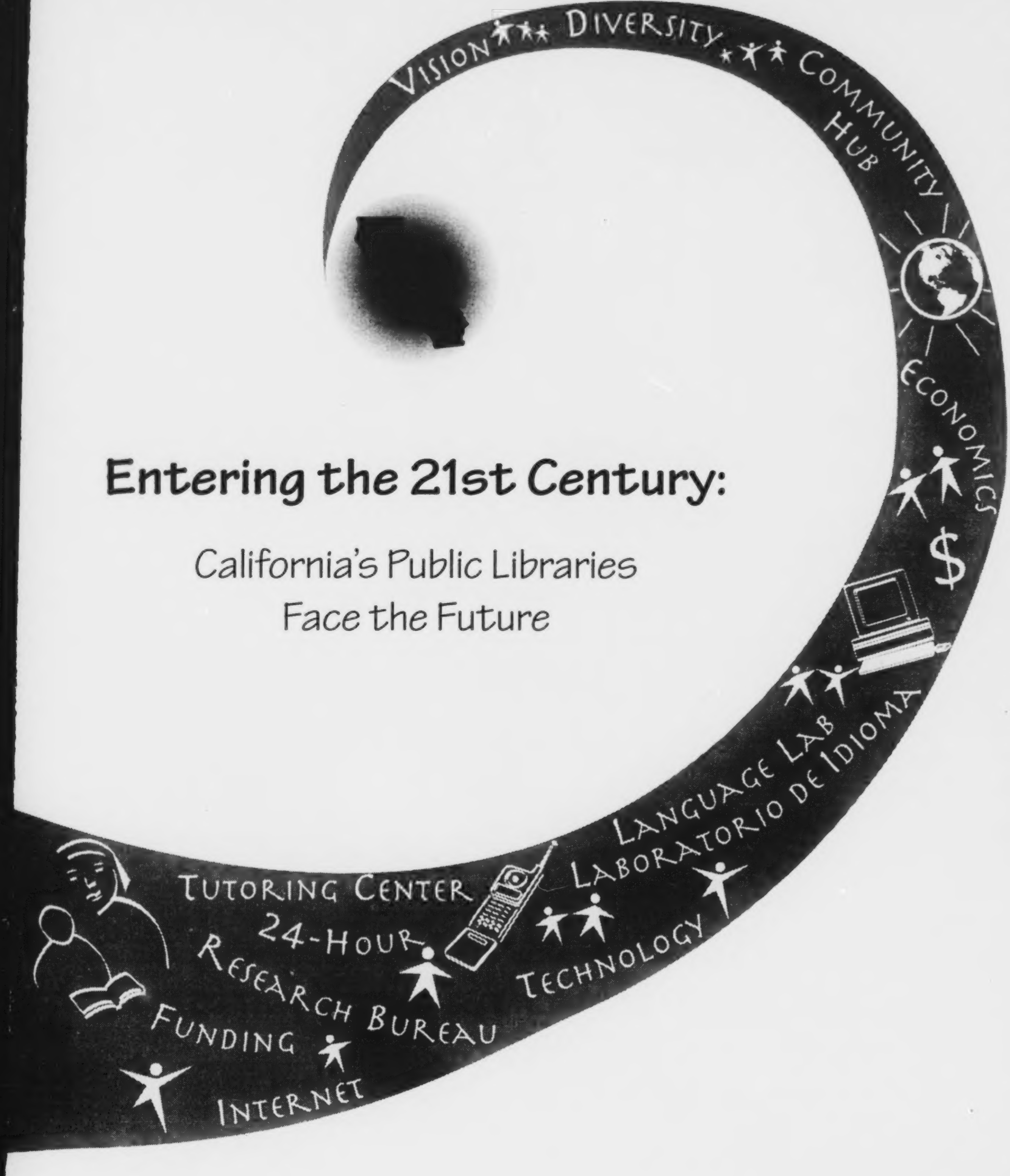
"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Cameron D. Robertson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IR056182

Institute for the Future • California State Library
April 1996


VISION
DIVERSITY
COMMUNITY HUB
ECONOMICS
$
LANGUAGE LAB
LABORATORIO DE IDIOMA
TECHNOLOGY
TUTORING CENTER
24-HOUR
RESEARCH BUREAU
FUNDING
INTERNET

Entering the 21st Century:

California's Public Libraries Face the Future

Institute for the Future • California State Library
April 1996

For additional copies of this report, contact:

California State Library
Library Development Services Bureau
P.O. Box 942837
Sacramento, California 94237-0001

For questions about this project, contact:

Institute for the Future
2744 Sand Hill Road
Menlo Park, California 94025-7020
415-854-6322 • Fax: 415-854-7850

This publication was supported in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education under the provisions of the Library Services and Construction Act, administered in California by the State Librarian. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Education or the California State Library, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education or the California State Library should be inferred.

Reproduction of this report is permitted for the entire or part of the report, except for the purposes of resale or commercial gain.

PREFACE

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR THE FUTURE

The Institute for the Future (IFTF) is a nonprofit applied research and consulting firm founded in 1968 and dedicated to understanding technological, environmental, and societal changes and their long-range domestic and global consequences. For more than 28 years, IFTF has worked with government agencies and corporations to think systematically about the future and develop crucial strategic plans in the midst of rapidly changing environments. IFTF's work covers both of the central aspects of planning: forecasting key changes and analyzing the consequences of those changes. IFTF has worked closely with leaders in business, government, and citizens' groups to help all levels of government anticipate change and plan their future development.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

California's public libraries have provided services to Californians since 1909. Each year, 167 million items are circulated and 48 million reference questions are answered for Californians by public libraries. As we move toward the 21st century, dramatic forces are transforming the broader environment: immigration is rapidly changing the composition of the state's population, public funding has fallen, the gaps in educational attainment are widening, and new information technologies are redefining how we access and use information. These drivers are forcing California's public libraries to rethink their roles in the community and how they are organized to fulfill them.

In the midst of this transformation, IFTF conducted a project for the California State Library designed to think systematically about the future of California's public libraries, examine the challenges they're facing, and develop a range of strategies for entering the 21st century. Throughout this project, we collaborated with and received input from many people, whom we would like to thank emphatically for their comments, suggestions, and input.

First, we want to thank the Libraries of Tomorrow Task Force who took time away from their busy schedules to meet with us, dig through the data, share their insights and experiences, develop visions, and identify strategies for taking public libraries into the 21st century. Thank you for your hard work, collaboration, and commitment. The task force consisted of Marie Bryan, Anne Campbell, Steve Cisler, Arne Croce, Linda Crowe, Kenneth Dowlin, June Fleming, Martin Gomez, Luis Herrera, Lesley Hoenecke, Stephen Jones, John Kallenberg, Susan Goldberg Kent, Mary Jo Levy, Kathleen G. (K.G.) Ouye, Amado Padilla, David Palmer, Scott Pilchard, and Arthur Gross Schaefer.

As we continued to uncover the information needs and attitudes of Californians, we worked with the Woodland Public Library to co-develop a pilot strategic planning process for California public libraries based on the emerging environmental trends. We want to thank Marie Bryan, Library Director of the Woodland Public Library, and her steering committee members, all of whom worked so hard with us to develop a process that resulted in a strategic plan for the Woodland Public Library, a plan that will also benefit other public libraries and their communities.

We also want to thank those who participated in an expert workshop. They stretched our vision of where technology will take us in the next decade and how it will affect Californians' use of public libraries. This group consisted of Kathie Blankenship, Smart Valley; Poncho Chang, Kaiser Family Foundation; Chuck Darrah, San Jose State University; Candace Ford, Planetree Health Resource Center; Teresa Hackler, Smart Valley; Jay Hendee, New Haven Unified School District; Brewster Kahle, WAIS, Inc.; Ed McGuigan, RITS/Stanford; and Doug Schuler, CPSR & Civic Practices Network.

We would like to acknowledge three special individuals at the California State Library—Yolanda Cuesta, Gail McGovern, and Barbara Will—who had the foresight and vision to explore the emerging trends in California and think through the ways public libraries can respond to these challenges in order to benefit their communities. We appreciate the opportunity to work with three inspiring women committed to creating a bright future for all Californians.

Finally and most importantly, we want to thank the Californians who participated in the statewide survey and allowed us and the library community to understand their emerging needs and begin to plan new services and strategies that will take the public library into the 21st century.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

vii INTRODUCTION

E1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 PART I. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES
3 1. Older and Less Settled: California's New Demographic Profile
9 2. California's Cultural Diversity
13 3. Youth: The Challenge of the Future
21 4. Californians and Information Technology
27 5. The California Economy After the Recession
33 6. The Changing Landscape of California Business
37 7. A New Paradigm for Work
41 8. Financing the State's Public Needs
45 9. Information Searching in California
53 10. Equitable Access to Information
63 11. Californians Upgrading Skills
67 12. Strong Support for Public Libraries

75 PART II. A VISION FOR CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES
77 A Visit to the Public Library in 2005

83 PART III. STRATEGIC CHOICES FOR CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES
85 **Partner with Community and Other Organizations**
87 1. Build Community Support
91 2. Enter Fruitful Community Collaborations
95 3. Facilitate Continuing Education
99 4. Find New Funding
103 5. Evaluate Needs and Services
107 **Develop New Information and Technology Resources**
109 6. Develop New Community Services
115 7. Create and Organize Intellectual Capital
119 8. Shift from Analog to Digital
123 **Reorganize for the 21st Century**
125 9. Create Community Library Space
131 10. Rethink Organizational Structure
133 11. Optimize Library Operations
135 12. Redefine Library Staff

139 PART IV. PLANNING WITH A LOCAL LIBRARY: WOODLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

145 APPENDIX A. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

149 APPENDIX B. LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

California's public libraries face a decade of challenges, a decade in which

- **The majority of Californians, including the heaviest library users, will become regular and adept users of electronic information resources.**
- **The majority of Californians will have many and varied ethnic backgrounds.**
- **A growing proportion of young people will live in homes where English is not the primary language.**
- **Public libraries will be forced to continue to compete for direct public funding with a myriad of other social claims.**

Despite these challenges, the outlook for public libraries remains bright, mainly because Californians' support for public libraries is wide and deep. Regular users cut across all sociodemographic groups—the rich and poor; English and non-English speakers; seniors, adults, and young people; urban, suburban, and rural residents; and sophisticated technology users and those who shy away from technology altogether. As a result, public libraries—already at the center of much of community life—are ideally positioned to help *everyone* move into the information age, but especially those who may not have the resources to do so on their own.

A distillation of the results of a year-long research project, *Entering the 21st Century: California's Public Libraries Face the Future* is designed to help California's public librarians think through the strategic implications of a California undergoing tremendous change. Fieldwork for this report included the compilation of sociodemographic data, forecasts of the key forces affecting public library services, a statewide survey of the information needs and usage patterns of Californians, interviews with library administrators and experts, workshops with technology experts and key stakeholders, and a detailed strategic planning process for one California public library.

The report has four main sections and two appendixes:

- A review of the most important issues that will affect California's public library services in the next decade.
- A vision of the public library in the year 2005.
- A review of the major strategic choices for addressing the issues and realizing the vision.
- A case study of a prototypical detailed strategic planning process with one local public library based on all the information gathered in the study.
- Two appendixes, one describing the scope and methodology of the work, the other presenting a list of tables and figures.

IFTF hopes this information will spur librarians and other stakeholders to think about the critical social and technological transformations affecting all Californians and to help them redefine the role of public libraries in light of these vast changes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

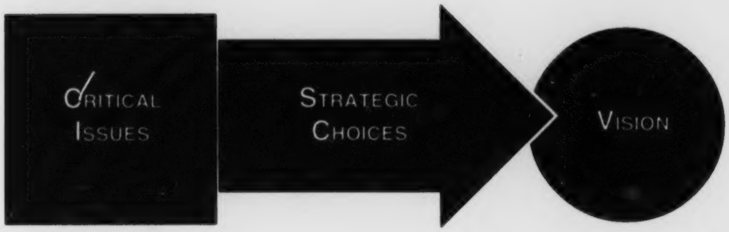
Entering the 21st Century: California's Public Libraries Face the Future is the fruit of a yearlong strategic planning project conducted by the Institute for the Future (IFTF) for the California State Library. The book is designed to help California's local public libraries and other community stakeholders think about the strategic implications of fundamental changes in the California environment. If librarians and other stakeholders can be encouraged to think beyond today's sometimes overwhelming problems, they can strategically position the public library to take its place as a central information resource in California's 21st century communities.

Most of the material in this book is drawn from California as a whole. Thus, not all of it is relevant to all of California's public libraries. Certainly, one of the striking features of California is the broad diversity of its local communities' interests and needs.

In our work with local librarians, however, we have found that at least some of the issues and choices defined here will be relevant for each public library. Indeed, in a dramatically changing world, understanding the basic issues facing public libraries in general and learning how other communities are responding to them is an important first step for any local library addressing its own strategic imperatives. Only then can the library create its unique vision of what it wants to be.

Each of the four parts of the book presents raw material—critical issues, a vision of the library of the future, strategic choices, and a pilot strategic planning project. Local public libraries can draw on this material for planning sessions with staffs, boards, or community groups. Figure E1 shows the key elements of a full strategic planning cycle.

Figure E1
A Sample Planning Process with a Local Library



Source: IFTF

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

If librarians and other stakeholders can be encouraged to think beyond today's sometimes overwhelming problems, they can strategically position the public library to take its place as a central information resource in California's 21st century communities.

PART I: CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Issues are basic underlying trends or combinations of events that present a threat or opportunity for key players. Drawing on information from statewide and local surveys, IFTF worked with a task force of innovative California librarians, experts on new information technology, and local supporters of public libraries to identify 12 issues that will be particularly important for public libraries in the next decade.

- *Demographics.* California's population will continue to grow faster than the country as a whole, especially on the fringes of the state's two big urban centers—the Los Angeles basin and the San Francisco Bay Area. Not only is the population growing, it is growing older. The number of people over 65 will double between now and the year 2020, a statistic particularly important to public libraries, since older people are not likely to be heavy library users. To meet this growth, public libraries must continue to expand their services in the growing regions of the state, while in other, more mature communities they must maintain current services.

- *Cultural diversity.* The diversity of California's population—whether measured by language or cultural background—is growing tremendously. Public libraries must work to build loyal supporters among all California's constituencies and must play a key role in integrating California.

- *Special needs of youth.* The number of children is increasing in California and a growing portion of them are living in poverty or need special help with language. In a globally competitive, information-intensive world, education is critical. The earnings gap between those who have gone to college and those who have not has doubled in the last 15 years. As a result, public libraries must do all they can to promote literacy, to teach research skills to the young, to reinforce formal education, and to support lifelong learning.

- *Information technology.* California leads the world in the diffusion and use of interactive home-based technology. Almost half of all Californians use a PC at work and almost half have a PC at home. But the new technologies are much more likely to be available for the rich and educated. Public libraries must work to provide access to information technology for all members of their communities.

- *The California economy.* California is just recovering from its worst economic recession since the 1930s. The first lesson is that public libraries must learn to articulate their value to their communities in troubled economic times. Meanwhile, recovery brings a new set of issues. While the middle class, a traditional core supporter of the public library, is shrinking, the number of affluent, educated Californians is growing rapidly. This is a unique opportunity for providing a new range of services to a group that uses the library heavily.

- *California's prosperous businesses.* Two dynamic sectors are leading California's economic expansion—the service industry and research-intensive manufacturing. The products of these industries, especially technology products, are increasingly sold on the competitive world market. These trends demand a flexible and adaptable workforce, one that knows something about the cultures of other countries. In response, public libraries must become centers for lifelong learning, not just for cutting-edge researchers and creative media directors, but for the far larger group of workers who bring practical applications of the new technologies to daily life.

• *New paradigms for work.* California's new industries require an educated, flexible workforce. A large majority of Californians state that they need to learn things all the time to keep up with a changing workplace. A growing portion of workers (almost one-third) are also working at home. These workers are much more likely to use newer technologies. Public libraries must respond to the needs of this active, demanding group without disregarding the needs of the less educated and those who use fewer technologies.

• *Public finance.* Public revenues grew very slowly during the California recession of the early 1990s, while three program areas—health care, public protection, and public assistance—increased their share of public funding. At the same time, a significant share of local funding was tied to specific spending programs. Both of these trends will cause longer term problems for funding public libraries even though the outlook for local government revenue overall should improve in the years ahead.

• *Californians search for information.* The project's statewide survey shows that Californians search regularly for a variety of information and that those with higher household incomes, higher levels of education, and greater exposure to information technologies search for more information. Despite the fact that Californians lead the country in the use of new technologies, they also tend to be heavy readers. Each week, more than two-thirds of adults read newspapers and magazines and a majority read books.

• *Equitable access to information.* Subgroups in California approach the search for information in different ways. For example, those interviewed in a language other than English in the statewide survey are much less likely to search for information. And those who search for information more often (those with higher incomes and education, for the most part) are much more likely to be frustrated in finding what they are looking for. This poses a double problem. Public libraries must help those who don't yet know how to use information learn the power of information, while also responding to the escalating needs of those who already know how to find information on their own.

• *Upgrading skills.* Two-thirds of working Californians agree strongly that they need to learn new skills continually to keep up in the workplace, and 60% of California adults agree strongly that computer skills are among the most important. Public libraries must have a strategic policy for responding to these strong needs for lifelong learning.

• *Support for public libraries.* There is much good news for public libraries: the majority of Californians use the library once a month or more; various groups—the rich, the well-educated, the young, families with young children, Hispanics, Asians, and African Americans—show strong support for the library; and more Californians rate the public library as an "excellent" source of information as compared with almost any other community resource. The majority of Californians are also willing to pay more for better library services. Public libraries must figure out how to leverage such support and resources.

PART II: A VISION FOR CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

To plan successfully for the future, each public library must have a vision that embodies the longer term goals of key stakeholders in the community. Thus, each public library's vision is unique, and each public library's strategic planning process will take a different track.

But that doesn't mean public librar-

To plan successfully for the future, each public library must have a vision that embodies the longer term goals of key stakeholders in the community.

To position themselves to achieve longer term strategic goals, public libraries must begin by making important choices today.

ies don't have something to learn from each other. Included in this book is a single vision that embodies the visions gathered over the course of the project from librarians around the state. A narrative depicting a visit to a typical library in the year 2005, this vision shows a compendium of the changes librarians expect to see rather than a profile of any one library.

Important aspects of the vision include:

- An innovative "Commons" designed for people to meet and communicate, both face-to-face and electronically.
- Communitywide services such as language and literacy labs for English and non-English speakers, programs for understanding tax or health care forms, and access to space for community groups.
- Value-added research services.
- Community archives of historical and current information.
- Programs and spaces designed for specific age groups, such as children and teens, to meet specific needs, such as education, language, and technology use.
- Access to and training for information technologies.
- Flexible access to library services by means of interactive kiosks and classroom computers, for example.
- Business–library and community college–library partnerships for providing telecommuting services, resources for job searches, and continuing education.

PART III: STRATEGIC CHOICES FOR CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

To position themselves to achieve longer term strategic goals, public libraries must begin by making important choices today. The range of choices depends on the visions they have articulated and the local resources and options they can generate. While such choices must be driven locally, examples of how other libraries and organizations have addressed similar strategic issues can be helpful. Twelve strategies are particularly relevant for California's public libraries. They fall into three broad categories.

Partner With Community and Other Organizations

- *Build community support.* To become the center of information services for the local community, public libraries must build networks with key players in the community, form strategic alliances, and manage community relations. In this way they can reach the community more effectively with their own story and build the public support they will need to reach more ambitious strategic goals.
- *Enter fruitful community collaborations.* With limited resources of their own, public libraries must reach out to a variety of potential partners in the community who share some of their own goals and visions about the importance of accessible information. Potential partners include K-12 schools, local colleges, government agencies, businesses, and the not-for-profit sector.
- *Facilitate continuing education.* The vast majority of Californians agree that lifelong education and new computer skills are essential to success. Libraries can play a key role in support of continuing education, a role that can manifest itself in a variety of ways: Internet training for those without it at work or home, language training for both English and non-English speakers, partnerships with local adult schools and community colleges, and business and marketing training for small businesses and local government officials.

- *Find new funding.* California public libraries must find new resources to expand their role in an increasingly information-rich society. There are two ways of doing this: building direct support by better articulating the critical role of the public library in the community, and finding partners in the community with common values and goals and leveraging the partnership's combined resources.

- *Evaluate needs and services.* Regular evaluations are essential for running an effective library program. This means evaluating the effectiveness of existing services as well as identifying the community's ongoing needs and problems.

Develop New Information and Technology Resources

- *Develop new community services.* Public libraries should develop new types of information-based services in which the whole community can participate. Working with other agencies, public libraries can become the central node of information on important areas such as health, literacy, and local agency activities. Public libraries can also foster interactive discussion groups to disseminate information on other public agency or community initiatives.

- *Create and organize intellectual capital.* With the pace of change so high in so many California communities, it is important to keep an ongoing record of the community and to organize a community's diverse information sources. Public libraries are the natural builders and keepers of a community's archives and can provide the most effective means of organizing, standardizing, and facilitating the presentation of electronic information about the community and its services and resources.

- *Shift from analog to digital.* As the center of community information, each public library must develop a strategy to deal with the emergence of new and varied sources of electronic information. Public libraries must build an infrastructure for access, develop the skills to work with the diverse technology needs of the community, and find new ways of presenting information in digital formats. Digital information presents a unique opportunity to offer some forms of library services 24 hours a day.

Reorganize for the 21st Century

- *Create community library space.* Physical space often defines the role an agency plays in the local community. In building new or rebuilding current space, public libraries should consider several options: sharing space with other organizations with complementary services, building more public-purpose spaces, and designing spaces that meet the more diverse information needs of future patrons.

- *Rethink organizational structure.* As California communities become more diverse and library users grow more sophisticated, public libraries must build more flexible operating structures. Possibilities include learning to work effectively with partners, organizing work remotely, working with dispersed staff, and continually redefining the staff's roles.

- *Optimize library operations.* In repositioning themselves for 21st century communities, California's public libraries must concentrate their resources on those activities that meet the needs of their constituencies. Each library should review which of their current activities are core functions and which are routine functions that can be outsourced more cost effectively. This could free important resources to concentrate on what the public sees as the libraries' key activities—reference librarians, good reference collections, and special learning programs.

As the center of community information, each public library must develop a strategy to deal with the emergence of new and varied sources of electronic information.

Public librarians will need to expand the range of their skills to include nontraditional competencies like cross-cultural community relations, community networking, marketing, user needs evaluation, and technology skills.

- *Redefine library staff.* As the activities of the California public libraries change, the professional skills of the staff are likely to change as well. Public librarians will need to expand the range of their skills to include nontraditional competencies like cross-cultural community relations, community networking, marketing, user needs evaluation, and technology skills. Public libraries must reevaluate both their recruiting strategies and training programs.

PART IV: PLANNING WITH A LOCAL LIBRARY: WOODLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Statewide information on issues and choices is not relevant in the same way for each local public library. To demonstrate how a planning process works for a typical public library, we conducted a full-scale strategic planning effort with the Woodland Public Library. Over seven months we worked with the Library Director and a Strategic Planning Committee made up of 15 community members representing staff, the library board, public officials, friends of the library, local business people, heads of local agencies, and library users.

The Woodland Public Library Strategic Planning Committee utilized the statewide information supplemented with material gathered locally. Members identified the critical issues for their own library's future role in the community, created a vision statement that positioned their public library as a key information resource in that community, and set out the strategic choices that would position them to achieve these goals.

While not a substitute for information about the local community, the statewide background information played at least four key roles:

- It brought home forcefully the need to think about strategic issues for the long term.
- It raised the level of awareness about key changes in the California environment relevant to local changes.
- It gave information about Californians' attitudes, their use of information, the concerns of key subgroups, and their strong feelings of support for the public library's mission.
- It presented a wide range of choices that other public libraries and public agencies have made to deal with similar issues.

We hope the information in this book can be of similar help to you.

PART I

CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Critical issues are combinations of trends or events that present important threats or opportunities for key stakeholders. After gathering information from a variety of sources (including a statewide survey of California adults about their use of information and the role of public libraries in their search for information), we worked with local librarians around the state to identify the issues they felt would be most important in the next decade. This section defines 12 issues that will be important to most of California's public libraries and describes their likely impacts.

1. OLDER AND LESS SETTLED: CALIFORNIA'S NEW DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

CRITICAL
ISSUES

California's population will continue to grow in the next ten years, but it will get gradually older. At the same time, Californians will move around more than ever, and more will settle away from the San Francisco Bay Area and the Los Angeles basin. To meet these changes, public libraries must address these strategic issues:

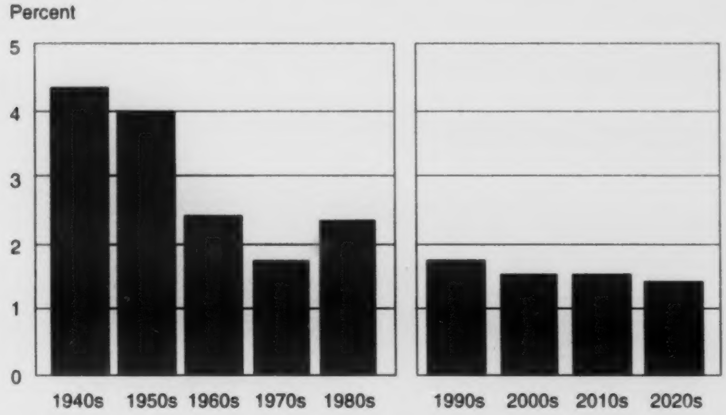
- California's population will continue to grow well above the national average—public libraries will serve an increasing population.
- The state's population will consist of an increasing number of people over 65—public libraries need to attract this group, which is now the least likely to use their services.
- Population growth will be largest in counties outside the two large clusters near Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area—public libraries in the growth areas must prepare for expansion.
- A traditionally mobile California population will be even more mobile in the future—public libraries must develop services that appeal to newcomers and build the loyalties of an ever-changing population.

CALIFORNIA'S POPULATION IS GROWING BUT GETTING OLDER

California's population has been characterized for decades by rapid growth: it increased from 10 million in 1950 to 20 million in 1970 to 30 million in 1990. But the rate of growth has slowed dramatically over the years. During the 1940s and 1950s, with an annual growth rate of over 4% per year, California was growing three times faster than the country as a whole. Today, at about 1.7% per year, it is growing at less than twice the national average. By the turn of the century, California's population will be growing at about 1.3% per year, just 30% faster than the country as a whole (Figure 1). Nonetheless, this growth will bring California's total population to over 42 million people by 2010.

Along with its continuing growth, the state of California is undergoing a major demographic transformation. The baby boomers—those born between 1945 and 1965—have long dominated the social and economic life of the state. As they grow older, they are gradually raising the average age of the state's population. As a result, by the early decades of the new

Figure 1
California's Gradually Slowing Population
(Average annual rates of growth)



Source: California Department of Finance, *California Statistical Abstract 1992* and *Projected Total Population,* Report 93 P-4.

century, the state's population tree will be that of a mature society rather than a youthful one (Figure 2).

The number and percentage of people over 65 will rise dramatically, from about 3 million in 1990 to over 7 million in 2020 (Table 1).

Table 1
Rapid Growth in People Over 65
(Millions)

1990	3.1
2000	4.0
2010	5.0
2020	7.3

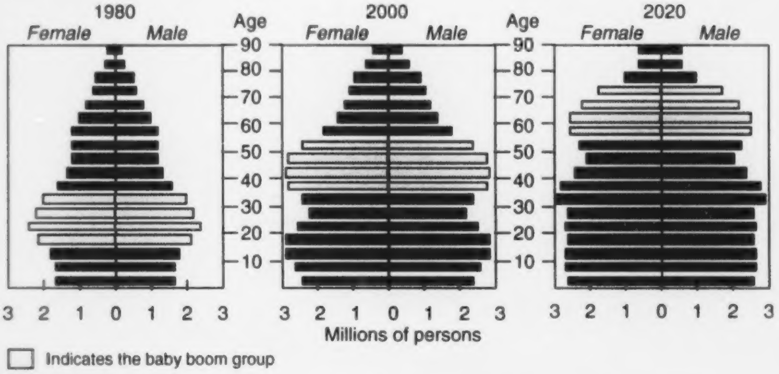
Source: California Department of Finance, *Projected Total Population*, 1993

THE EFFECTS OF THE BOOMERS' LIFE CYCLE

Since the baby boomers are so numerous and dominant, the state's social history can be traced through their life cycle. First were the years of risk-taking, when the population was quite willing to invest in the state's long-term future by supporting everything from the Central California Water System to the development of the finest state college system in the country. As the boomers age, however, the state's population—especially those who vote—is gradually moving to a more risk-averse profile. The prime issues for the older, more risk-averse boomers are crime, a balanced budget, and the erosion of public entitlements such as Social Security and Medicare. These issues are pushing aside the importance of building the state's infrastructure for the 21st century.

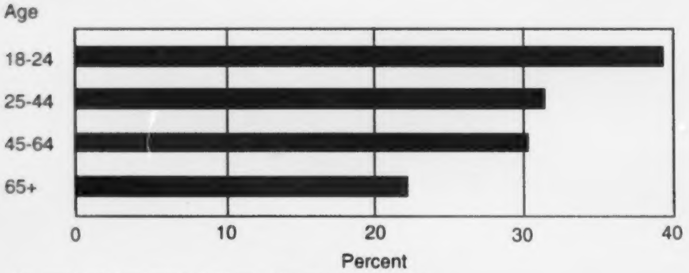
These changes in attitudes and behaviors will affect all public institutions, including local public libraries. For example, older people tend to use the library less, and thus may be less inclined to support it. Survey results show that people over 65 years old use the library with about half the frequency of young adults and are much less likely to be frequent users (Figure 3).

Figure 2
The Baby Boomers Age
(Millions of persons)



Source: California Department of Finance, Population Research Unit, Reports 88 P-4 and 93 P-3

Figure 3
Older People Use the Public Library Less
(Share of age group using the public library more than once a month)



Source: Field Research, California Library Survey, 1995

CALIFORNIA'S POPULATION SHIFTS EASTWARD

Almost two-thirds of Californians continue to live in the two big coastal clusters: the Bay Area and the Los Angeles basin. But large numbers of new Californians in the next decade will move into the counties on the peripheries of the coastal zones—San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura, San Diego, Sonoma, Contra Costa, and Solano—in search of affordable housing, smaller communities, and more easygoing lifestyles. The most dynamic, and most rapidly expanding, cities will be found in these areas. The greatest percentage increases will be further east in the Central Valley—in the Sacramento and Fresno metropolitan areas and the Sierra foothills (Figure 4).

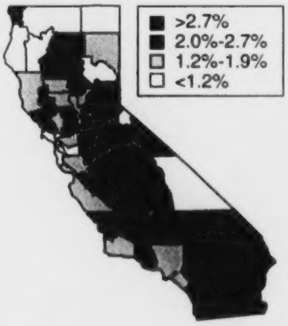
CALIFORNIANS' MOBILITY WILL BE GREATER

Californians have long been known for their mobility, and this won't change in the next decade. California has a higher turnover rate than the nation as a whole.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the net migration to California reached 400,000, the highest since World War II. But the number of immigrants went

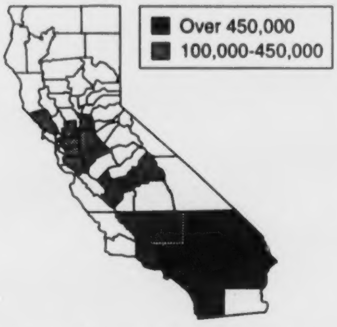
Figure 4
Californians Push Eastward

Average Annual Percent Growth, 1995-2005



Source: California State Department of Finance, *Projected Total Populations*

Absolute Population Increase



Source: California State Department of Finance, *Projected Total Populations*

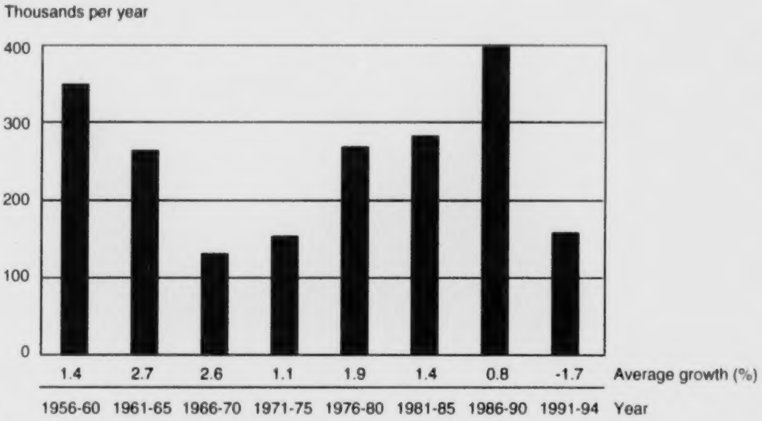
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

down sharply during the great California recession of the early 1990s, and over the last five years has been at its lowest since the early 1970s (Figure 5). These wide swings imply that, as the California economy recovers, we are likely to see a large net increase in migration once again.

Of special importance has been the composition of those coming to California in the last five years. While net population growth dropped dramatically, the migration from other countries continued at about 300,000 per year. How can this be possible? Long-settled California residents moved to neighboring states in numbers large enough to offset immigration from other countries.

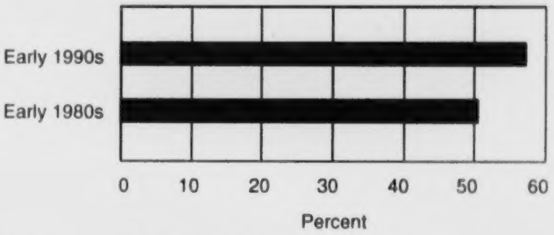
As a result, the number of California households whose tenure is five years or less has risen by almost 15% in the last decade (Figure 6).

Figure 5
Migration to California Follows the Economy



Source: California Department of Finance and Governor's Economic Report

Figure 6
More Recent Arrivals in Local Communities
(Share of all households living in the community for less than five years)



Source: Bureau of the Census, *Census of the Population*

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

Public libraries in California must address a series of issues caused by this demographic transformation. The issues include:

- *More people.* More people will be living in the state in 2005. The total is likely to rise from today's 32 million to over 42 million. On balance, public libraries will be serving more people in a greater variety of locations. While this will not affect all public libraries—some will continue to serve mature communities that will change little in overall population—many will see dramatic increases in the number and diversity of people they serve.

- *More older people.* The number of older people in the state will grow dramatically in the next decade. Today, 3.5 million people over 65 years old live in the state; by 2005, there will be 4.5 million, an increase of almost 30%. By 2020, the number of older Californians will be over 7 million. Since older people use the library much less than other age groups, the graying of California will challenge public libraries to provide services to those who don't currently use the library very often.

- *More people in new places.* Population growth will shift from the two large coastal megalopolises (the Los Angeles basin and the Bay Area) to counties and communities on the fringes of the coastal centers, to the Central Valley, and to the Sierra foothills. Since these areas tend to provide lower incomes and a lower tax basis, this migration will severely challenge these communities to build the infrastructure necessary for an effective 21st century public library system.

- *Less settled communities.* A large number of immigrants have moved to California in the last 20 years—natural growth accounted for less than half of the total population growth in that period. As a result, the share of householders living in the same house they lived in five years ago is down by 15% in the last decade and is now well under 45% for the average California community. This means that public libraries will be serving communities with a high turnover rate. They will have to work harder to build support for an effective and continuing public library system.

2. CALIFORNIA'S CULTURAL DIVERSITY

CRITICAL ISSUES

Not only is California's population changing its geographic distribution, it's also changing its mix of cultures, especially among the young. Hispanic and Asian cultures will be particularly important to California's future.

Public libraries need to understand and adapt to the following cultural changes:

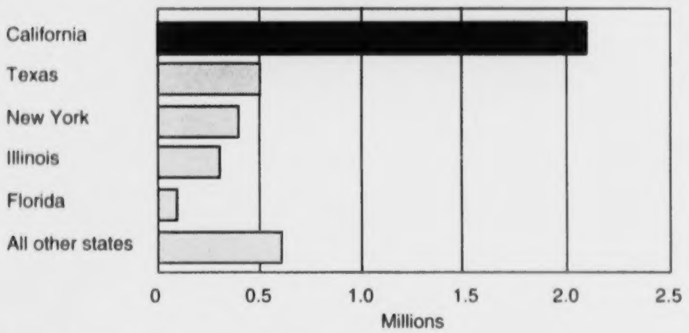
- More than half the state's population will be from cultures other than European by the year 2000—public libraries must reflect this growing diversity in the content of their programs and their holdings.
- More than half of young people under 25 are from cultures other than European—these will be the heaviest library users in the next decade.
- Those who speak a language other than English tend to rely on libraries for information more than any other group—public libraries must take advantage of this opportunity to build future strengths.

CALIFORNIA IS DIVERSE AND GROWING MORE SO

In the last decade and a half, 55% of the population growth in the state was accounted for by immigration from other states and countries. In the last five years, virtually all immigration has been from other countries, a good portion of it being undocumented immigration. One-third of all documented U.S. immigrants and over half of all undocumented immigrants move to California (Figure 7).

Fertility rates vary substantially by ethnic group. For example, Hispanics and African Americans are about two and a half times more likely than whites to have children. The combination of past migration patterns and fertility differentials has changed the composition of the current population across age cohorts. While non-Hispanic whites make up almost 80% of the

Figure 7
California Gets an Inordinate Share of Undocumented Immigration (Millions of undocumented residents in 1993)



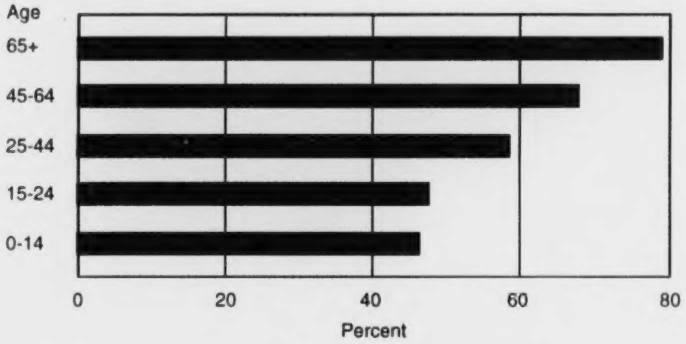
Source: Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1993 population over 65, non-Hispanic whites make up less than 50% of the population under 15 (Figure 8).

THE PACE OF DIVERSIFICATION IS ACCELERATING

Data from the last five years indicate that the pace of transformation of California's population is increasing. In the last five years, as the very deep recession in California discouraged immigrants from other states and led many established California families to move out of state, immigration from other countries to California continued to average about 300,000 per year. During that time, net domestic migration averaged an *outflow* of about 70,000 (Table 2). This means that the foreign-born population in California has been growing very rapidly. The number of Asians has been growing at four times the average of the state population, for example; the number of Hispanics, twice the average; and the number of non-Hispanic whites, only one-half.

The rapid change in migration patterns along with substantial differences in fertility rates will accelerate the change in the composition of the state's population. The share of non-Hispanic white population will be less than 50%

Figure 8
Non-Hispanic Whites Tend to Be Older
(Share of total population in 1990)



Source: California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit

Table 2
Migration During the Years of the California Recession
(Thousands)

	Natural Increase	*Domestic Migration*	*Estimated Foreign Migration*
1990	380	165	300
1991	397	0	300
1992	397	−50	300
1993	372	−200	300
1994	361	−250	300

Source: IFTF; based on data from California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit by 2000; among the young this is already the case. In fact, by the year 2000, Hispanic youngsters will be the largest group in the state (Figure 9).

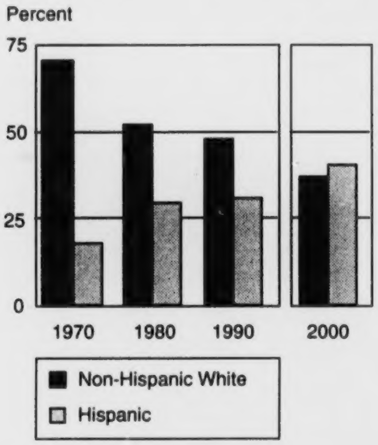
LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

The large immigration of people from other countries has exacerbated the language issue in the state dramatically. The share of the population that speaks a language other than English at home tripled during the 1980s and rose even higher during the 1990s (Figure 10).

The share of Asian households in California whose primary language in the home is other than English is especially high, but almost half of California households with Hispanic heritage also speak a language other than English at home (Figure 11). Still, a good number of adults in these households are proficient in both English and a second language.

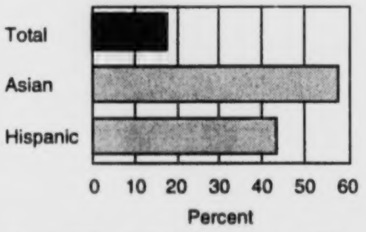
The language issue is particularly important for librarians. People who live in households in which a language other than English is spoken tend to use public libraries as much or more than others because fewer sources of information are otherwise available (Figure 12).

Figure 9
The Rapid Transformation of California
(Share of all children under the age of 5)



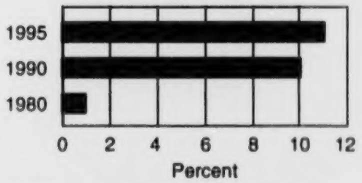
Source: California Department of Finance, *Projected Total Population,* Report 93 P-4

Figure 11
Many Californians Speak Another Language at Home
(Percent whose primary language at home is not English)



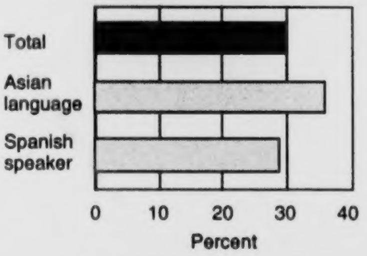
Source: California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 10
Californians Who Speak a Language Other Than English at Home
(Share of all California households)



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce; Census Bureau; and Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 12
Those Who Speak Other Languages Use Libraries Intensively
(Share who say they use the public library more than once a month)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

Public libraries will have to address the following issues of diversity:

- *Public libraries are part of a more diverse community.* Migration to California reached a peak in the late 1980s. While domestic migration fell off dramatically in the early 1990s, international immigration did not. In fact, while a large number of baby boomers born and raised in California left the state, a large number of people from Asia and Latin America moved into the state. Public libraries will have to adjust their programs and services to adapt to this rapid change in cultural diversity.

- *The biggest changes are taking place among the young.* The Hispanic and Asian populations in California tend to be much younger than the white population. Younger people are also the biggest users of public library services. Thus, public libraries must adapt their collections and services to better serve this rapidly expanding group of high users.

- *Non-English speakers are heavy users of the public library.* A large share of those who speak a language other than English use the library fairly often. This creates a unique opportunity for public libraries to build an extensive support network in a diverse California society.

3. YOUTH: THE CHALLENGE OF THE FUTURE

CRITICAL ISSUES

The number of children is increasing dramatically in California, and their needs are diverse. Unfortunately, the educational system's resources are not keeping pace.

In this climate, public libraries will need to address the following issues:

- The number of elementary school students is rising and will continue to rise for the next decade—public libraries must respond to the growing needs of this heavy user group.

- The share of children with limited proficiency in English is up sharply—public libraries can close the gap by reaching out to these children in two ways: by supporting their use of English and by providing resources in their first language.

- Family and societal support of children is diminishing—public libraries are one of a limited number of public agencies that can provide important supplemental services that build lifelong interests and skills in education and learning.

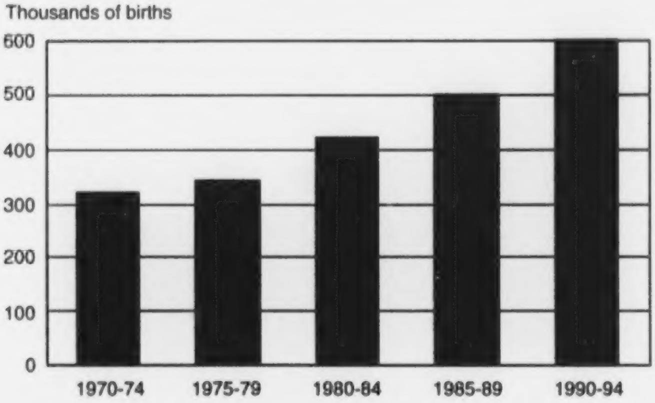
- Education differentials are creating even larger gaps between the haves and have-nots—public libraries can close the gap by offering information to everyone.

MORE KIDS, GREATER CHALLENGES: YOUTH AT RISK

With the greater immigration of young people to the state and the higher fertility rates of many of the new residents, the number of children born in California has risen steadily since the early 1970s (Figure 13).

Unfortunately, a large proportion of these young people are at risk. The share of children living in families in

Figure 13
The Number of Births Are Up in California



Source: Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit

24

poverty has increased dramatically, for example. In the early 1970s, about 15% of children were in households below the poverty line; today that share is close to 25% (Figure 14).

Other important measures tell the same story. For example, the number of children who receive welfare payments in the state is up dramatically: while 900,000 California children received AFDC payments in the mid-1970s, over 1.7 million do now. Further, the percentage of children without health insurance has risen from about 20% in the early 1980s to 23% today. This is 35% above the national average.

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES ARE NOT KEEPING PACE

Not only are youths finding themselves increasingly at risk, but the system that can best pull them out of risk—the educational system—doesn't have the full set of resources to keep up with its growing population. In the last decade, K–12 enrollment has increased by more than a million students, and in the decade to come, the number of people under 19 will grow by 30% from 8.5 million to 11.2 million. The steady increase in elementary enrollment will continue well past the year 2000. Such growth presents two main challenges to the educational system: funding and educating a diverse student body.

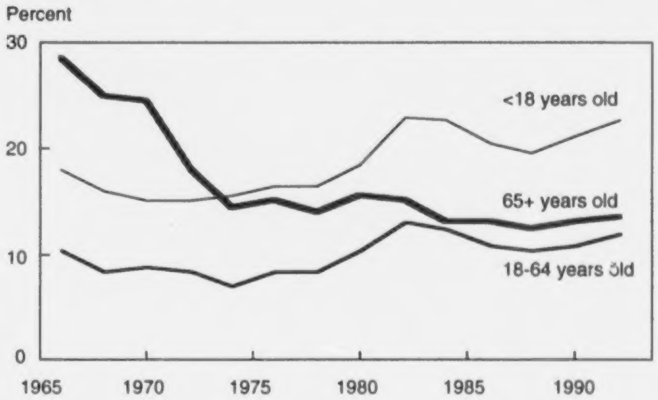
California Education Is Underfunded

The simple fact is that California is not investing enough money in K–12 education. The state is spending less than the majority of other states on education and that amount has been falling in relative terms for the last decade (Figure 15).

As spending per pupil decreases, class size increases. California now ranks last in the United States in classroom size (Figure 16).

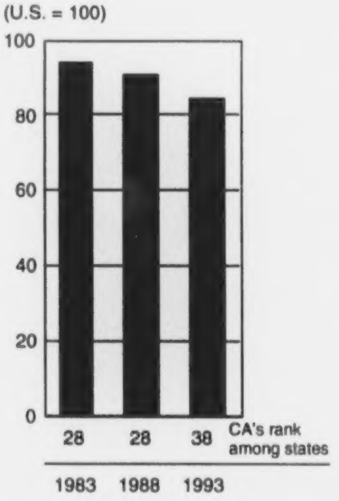
California schools also spend less than any other state on school libraries.

Figure 14
Young People Are More Likely to Live in Poverty
(Share of age group in households earning less than the official poverty standard)



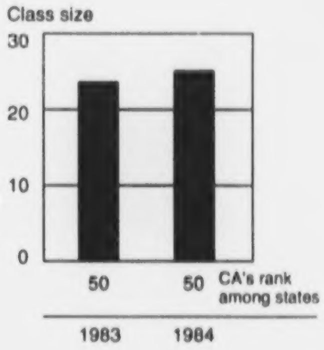
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Figure 15
California Is Lagging Further Behind Other States on Spending per Pupil



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Center for Education Statistics

Figure 16
California's Classes Are Bigger Than Any Other State's



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Center for Education Statistics

In the last decade, librarians have all but vanished from California primary schools, with one librarian serving over 200 teachers (Figure 17).

This lack of funding for essential educational resources puts increasing pressures on other institutions—such as public libraries—to fill the gap.

Educating a Diverse Student Body

A second critical issue facing California's educational system is that schools are asked to educate an increasingly diverse population, a growing number of whom have limited proficiency in English. The share of California's school children who need help with language is rising each year. The total number of students enrolled in English proficiency programs rose from 450,000 in 1984 to 1.2 million in 1994 and now accounts for over 23% of all students (Figure 18).

The number of different languages spoken by students is a dramatic challenge as well. While three-quarters of the students with limited English proficiency speak Spanish, the population as a whole speak at least 10 different languages—Spanish, Vietnamese, Hmong, Cantonese, Cambodian, Tagalong, Armenian, Korean, Lao, and Mandarin. At least 10,000 students statewide speak each of these languages. Underfunded, the educational system is struggling to meet the needs of these groups.

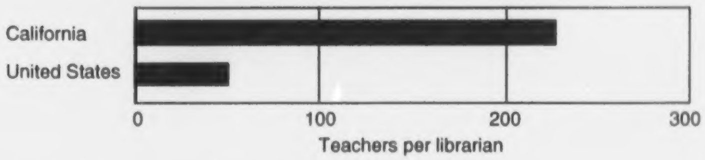
COLLEGE IS ALSO INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT

K–12 education is only the beginning. College education is becoming increasingly necessary for those who hope to achieve and maintain middle class status.

In general, the American economy is moving from heavy manufacturing to knowledge and services. Simply, U.S. businesses are embedding more knowledge and fewer raw materials in their products, and the service sector is growing more sophisticated and demanding.

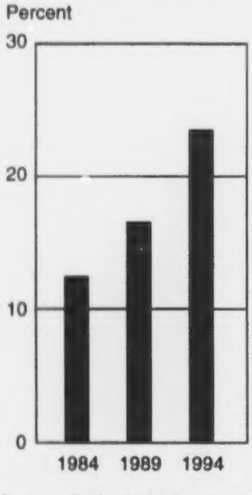
In manufacturing, the total amount of material product used in the United States (tons of steel, barrels of oil, tons of cotton, bushels of wheat) is rising

Figure 17
Librarians Have Almost Disappeared From California Schools
(Teachers per librarian)



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Center for Education Statistics

Figure 18
The Percent of Students Who Need Help With English Is Up
(Share of all students enrolled in English proficiency programs)



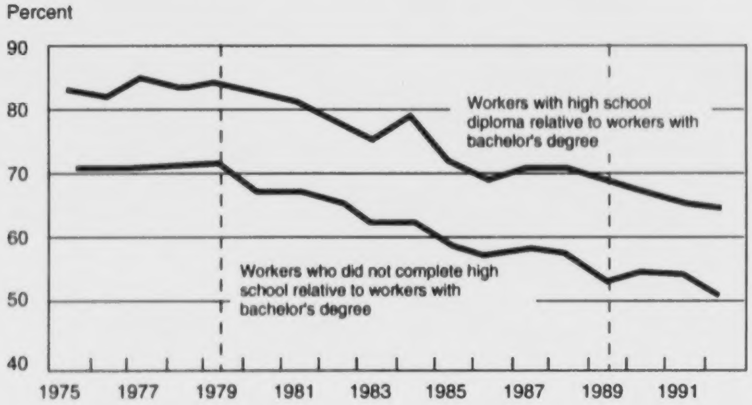
Source: California Department of Education, *Language Census Report* only slowly, while the value of final products is rising dramatically as we add elements that enhance final value—electronic chips that control responses, wireless connections, recycled materials, more attractive designs. Likewise, in the service sector, the fastest growing services are the more sophisticated business services like finance, law, medicine, and software design, each of which puts a high premium on knowledge.

As a result, the well-rewarded jobs and careers are those that require extensive training and education. Since 1980, the earning gap between young full-time workers with B.A. degrees and those with only high school diplomas has grown from about 15% to 35% (Figure 19).

Over a lifetime, the correlation of the median level of earnings with educational attainment is striking. Earnings steadily increase with educational attainment, at least until one faces a choice between a professional degree (such as law, medicine, or business) and a Ph.D. (Table 3).

The rise in income related to education has spurred college attendance in

Figure 19
The Relative Earning Gap of Education Grows
(Relative earnings of year-round, full-time workers, age 25-34)



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Educational Attainment in the United States*, various years

Table 3
More Education Means More Income

	Median Earnings (Thousands of dollars)
No high school diploma	14.1
High school only	22.8
Some college	27.7
Bachelor's degree	36.7
Master's degree	43.4
Professional degree	70.7
Ph.D.	52.3

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Educational Attainment in the United States*, 1994 the last 25 years. Since 1970, the share of young people attending college has risen from about 27% to over 50% today and appears to be continuing to rise (Figure 20).

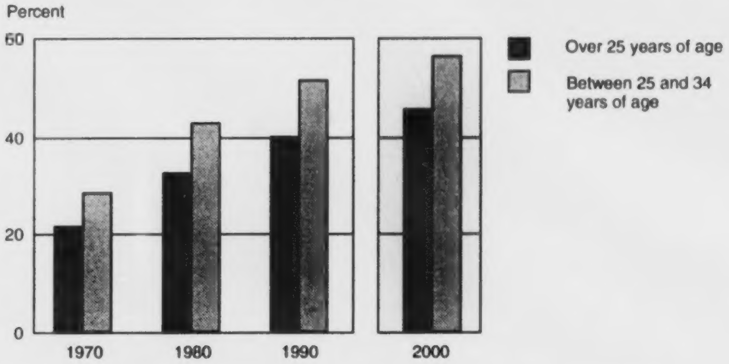
BUT NOT EVERYONE GETS TO COLLEGE

If the road to higher income and a chance for a better standard of living begins with a college education, the road to college begins at K–12. As mentioned previously, however, California's K–12 system is strapped, putting many California students at risk.

Particularly affected are those from various cultural, linguistic, income, and family groups. The share of those going to college varies dramatically by ethnic group, for example. A larger share of Californians of Asian heritage go on to complete college than any other ethnic group (Figure 21).

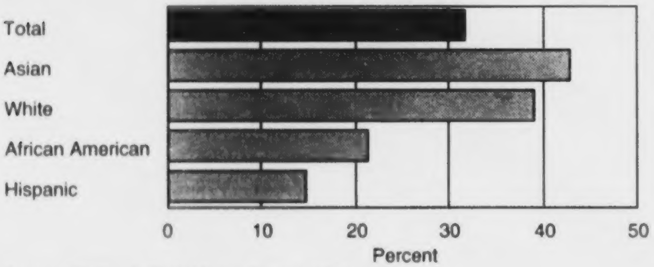
Other measures of educational performance are associated with other sociodemographic indicators. For example, children from families with annual incomes under $20,000 are five times more likely to drop out of school

Figure 20
More Than Half of All Young People Have Been to College
(Share who have attended at least one year of college)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Educational Attainment in the United States*, various years

Figure 21
More Asians Have Completed College
(Percent)

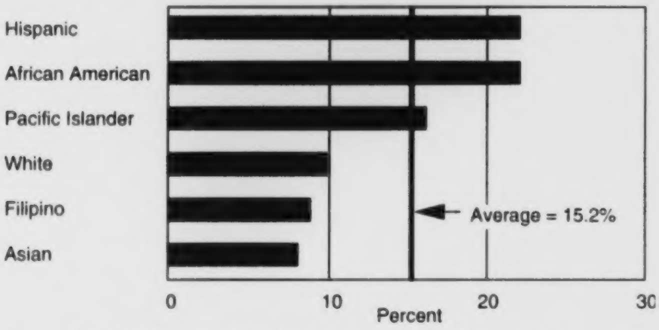


Source: California State Library Survey, 1995 than children from households with annual incomes over $40,000. Because of factors such as these, the high school dropout rate is very high for Hispanic and African American students and above average for students from the Pacific Islands (Figure 22).

Still, despite the sizable share of young people in California who live in homes with incomes under the poverty level, and the recent immigration of large numbers of students with limited proficiency in English, the overall dropout rate in California has declined by 40% in the last decade, a clear measure of success for a school system under pressure (Figure 23).

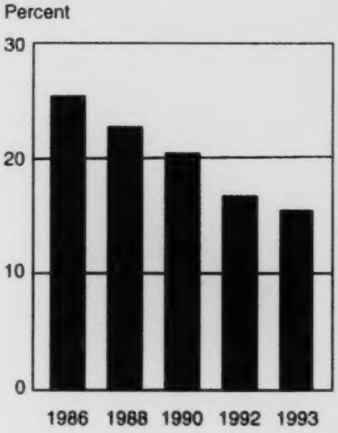
On the other hand, even those who get to college are not always adequately prepared. About 30% of University of California freshmen and 49% of California State University freshmen need remedial assistance in English before they can succeed in college-level courses. Students who need remedial education take much longer to graduate than those who do not.

Figure 22
Sizable Discrepancies in Dropouts by Ethnic Group
(Three-year dropout rates for high school class of 1993)



Source: California Department of Education, *Dropout Rates in Schools*

Figure 23
Dropout Rates Are Falling in California
(Total dropout rates for graduating class)



Source: California Department of Education, *Dropout Rates in Schools*

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

As the number of young people increases, public libraries must address a set of critical issues:

- *More young people.* The number of people under 18 will rise by almost 30% in the next decade. Librarians need to identify the services they offer the young and increase them in size and scale.

- *Language issues.* A rising share of children, especially in elementary schools, qualifies for special help in English proficiency—almost one-quarter of all students in California's public schools. The public libraries can play a critical role in supplementing formal language programs by providing a wide range of material in the students' language, for both the students and their families. Libraries can also encourage family literacy by providing English texts suited to families' cultural needs and interests.

- *Wider social support.* Family and societal support of children is declining in California. Many more children live in single-parent families and poverty than ever before, and more children depend on the welfare system. Furthermore, less money is invested per pupil in education in California than elsewhere in the country. In such an environment, public libraries can support at-risk children in their early years by providing a general environment and specific programs to encourage reading enjoyment and reference skills they can use all their lives.

- *Increasing gaps between the haves and have-nots.* Success in education at an early age leads to lifelong patterns of strong economic performance. Those with more education tend to have much higher lifetime earnings than those with less, and the gap is growing each year. During the all-important early years of education, public libraries can provide books, reference materials, and technology for those without them at home and thus offset gaps that sometimes make access to higher education a problem for those from lower-income families.

4. CALIFORNIANS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

CRITICAL ISSUES

Californians use information technologies more than anyone else in the country, and this trend is changing their work habits and lifestyles. Those who use information technologies tend to have more education and higher incomes and are more critical consumers and citizens. But not everyone has the same access to these information tools. Those without access risk falling behind neighbors in education and income.

Local public libraries face several strategic issues related to the evolution and diffusion of information technologies:

- California leads the country in the diffusion and use of interactive home-based technology—public libraries must develop a vision and plan for their role in this new world.
- Access to new technologies correlates with income and education—public libraries can make sure that all members of the community have access to some level of technology.
- Other public agencies, such as schools, are grappling with technology issues as well—public libraries ought to coordinate efforts with these other key players.

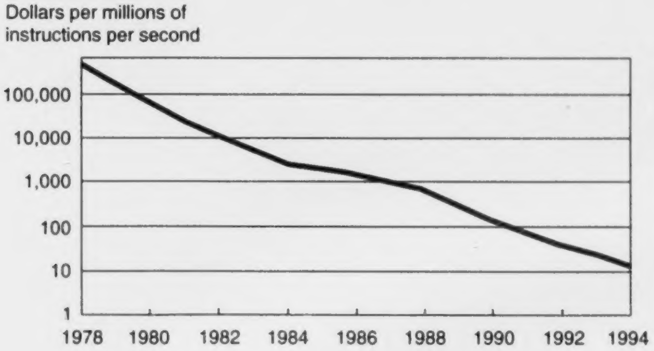
WHY THE TECH REVOLUTION? THE COST OF COMPUTING POWER HAS PLUMMETED

A sustained decrease in the cost of computing power is fueling the information technology revolution. The cost of computing power has fallen by more than 50% every year and a half for well over two decades; it is now under one-thousandth of what it was in 1980 (Figure 24). In practice, the average cost of a personal computer has remained fairly constant, but processing power has expanded exponentially, creating new ways of using and thinking about information.

THE PC REVOLUTION HAS ALREADY COME TO CALIFORNIA

California's industries have long been a force in the computer revolution, developing and manufacturing computers and their various applications for the world market. Couple this with

Figure 24
The Cost of Computing Power Is Down Dramatically



Source: Pathfinder Research

falling costs and it is no surprise that computers are commonplace in California households. Almost half of the population owns a computer at home; the same share uses one at work. Further, more than one-quarter of California adults have access to a commercial online service or the Internet either at home or work, and 18% claim to use the Internet at least once a week to search for information (Table 4).

As a result, as rated by PCs per population, California counties account for 6 of the top 10, and 13 of the top 25, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) in the country (Table 5).

Not only do Californians have more computers, they use them more, at least for communications and other network services. California has more Internet network connections than any other state, with two and a half times more than New York and Massachusetts and three times more than Virginia. All told, it has 50% more network connections per person than the average in the rest of the country (Figure 25).

Table 4
A Large Portion of California Has Joined the Information Revolution
(Percent)

Own a PC	46
Use a PC at work	45
Have access to online services at home or at work	27
Use online services at least once a week	18

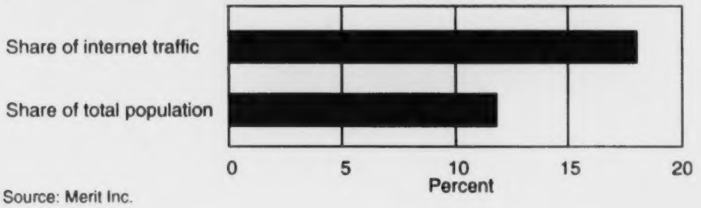
Source: Field Research, California Library Survey, 1995

Table 5
California Leads the Country in Use of PCs
(PCs per 100 population)

	PCs
1. San Jose MSA	**66**
2. San Francisco MSA	**60**
3. Boston	58
4. Washington, D.C.	53
5. Santa Cruz	**45**
6. Seattle	43
7. Oakland MSA	**42**
8. Santa Barbara	**40**
9. Minneapolis	38
10. Orange County	**38**

Source: *PC World*

Figure 25
California Has More Internet Traffic
(Share of total United States)



Source: Merit Inc.

INCOME AND EDUCATION ARE STRONG DRIVERS

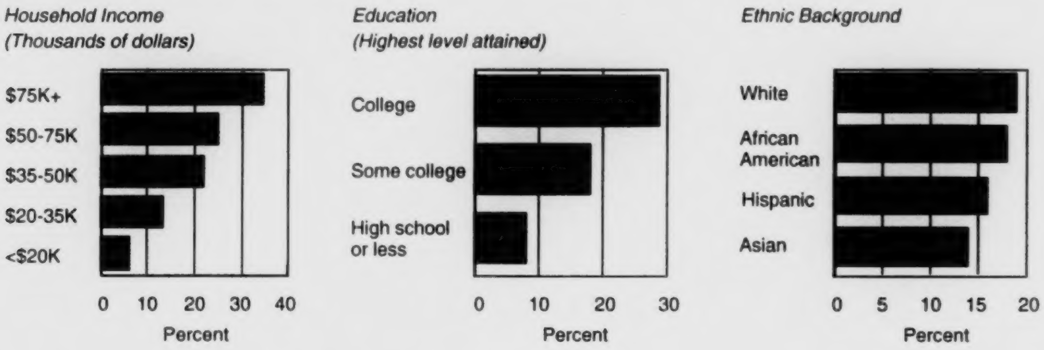
PC use at home and work correlates with family income. Households with incomes over $75,000 are four times more likely to have a PC than those with incomes under $20,000. In fact, 76% of high-income households have computers.

The same is true of education. Adults with college degrees are almost three times more likely to have a PC as those with only a high school diploma. While not quite as large, the ethnic divide is important as well. Non-Hispanic whites are twice as likely to have a PC at home as Hispanics (Figure 26).

Figure 26 also indicates that Asians, at 63%, are much more likely to have PCs in their houses or use them at work than other groups, including whites. This is true not just for PCs but for a whole spectrum of new information technologies as well (Figure 27).

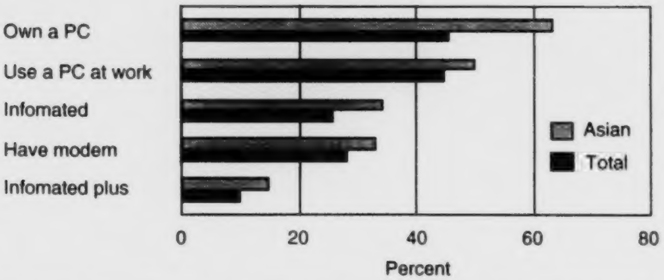
About half the people with PCs use them to access the Internet or commercial online services. Again, Califor-

Figure 26
PC Owners Tend to Be Rich, Educated, and White
(Share of group with a PC at home)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 27
Asians Are Infomated at Home and Work
(Percent)



Note: An "infomated" household is one that uses five of eight of the following technologies: VCR, cell phone, laser disc player, answering machine, computer, fax, voice mail, or CD player; an "infomated plus" household is one that uses six or more of the eight.

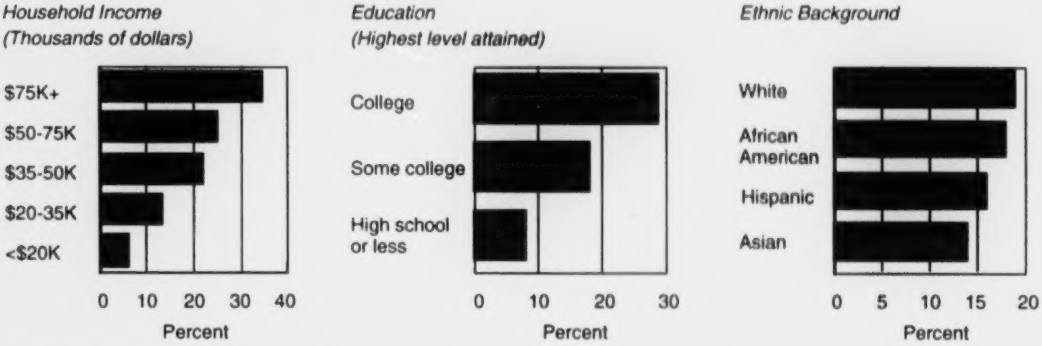
Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

nians use such services much more than the rest of the country: in the country as a whole, about 8% of adults use the Internet or online services at least once a week; in California, the share is 18%. The demographic profile of online users is similar to that of PC users—those with more income and education tend to use the Internet or online services more often (Figure 28). However, ethnic groups show very little variation in their access to online services. Surprisingly, Asian adults, who have the greatest access to PCs, are the least likely to use the Internet or online services.

One should not be misled by these figures to assume that "everyone" uses information technologies, however. A significant number of households don't have any of these electronic devices. In fact, just over 38% of Californians don't own a PC or use a PC at work, and 15% don't own *any* of the eight qualifying infomated technologies. Given these numbers, it is important for public libraries to remember those who don't have use of these sophisticated tools and to devise programs that provide access to and training for computers and other information technologies.

Figure 28
Online Users Tend to Be Rich, Educated, and White
(Share of group that uses online services at least once a week)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

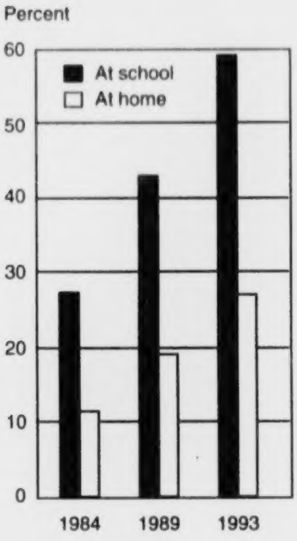
COMPUTERS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF EDUCATION

The most recent national survey shows that students are more likely to have access to computers at school than at home. In 1993, 60% of students said that they actually use computers in schools, and that share is growing rapidly. Only about half that percentage use computers at home, however (Figure 29).

Surprisingly, California is near the bottom in providing students access to computers. Despite the fact that California leads the country in current PC and Internet usage, the state ranks 42nd in the country in the ratio of students per PC, 30% higher than the national average (Figure 30).

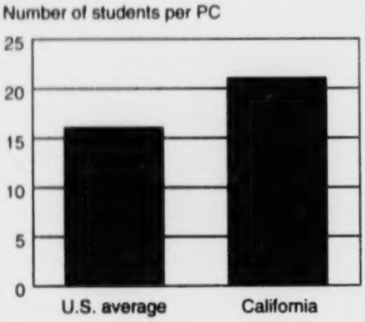
While there are relatively small variations in the use of computers by students from different ethnic and income groups in schools, the variations at home are more marked. White students are three times as likely to have computers at home than African American or Hispanic students (Figure 31). Students from families whose income is under $30,000 are three times less likely to own a computer than those from families whose income is over $50,000 (Figure 32).

Figure 29
More Than Half of U.S. Students Use Computers in School
(Students who use computers as a share of all students)



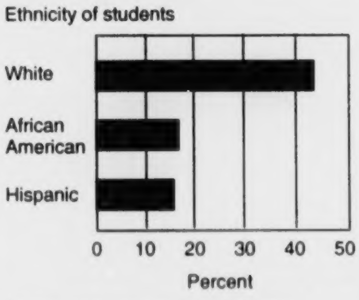
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1994

Figure 30
California Students Have More Students per PC



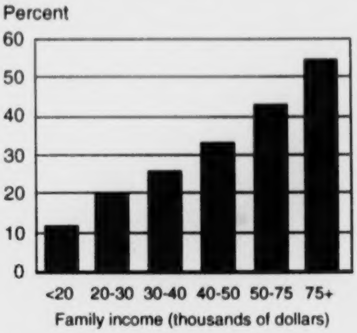
Source: Quality Education Data, 1994

Figure 31
Minority Students Are Less Likely to Have Computers at Home
(Share of all students)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Survey*, 1994

Figure 32
Low-Income Students Are Less Likely to Have Computers at Home
(Share of all students)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Reports*, 1994

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

The information technology revolution is forcing public libraries to address fundamental issues of purpose and definition:

- *Public libraries must adapt to infomated households.* California households lead the world in using new information technologies for information access, communication, and entertainment. Public libraries must adapt their programs to provide the types of information services needed by such "infomated" community members.

- *Public libraries can provide equal access to technology.* Access to new technologies is sharply divided by income and education. The public libraries should work to provide access to increasingly widespread and important information technologies for those who do not have them at home.

- *Public libraries must identify technology partners.* Other institutions in the community, such as schools, are also facing the challenges of technology. Public libraries must work to understand how the whole community—schools, health care organizations, private businesses, and other local agencies—is wrestling with the shift from analog to digital information and to identify friends and allies with common goals.

- *Public libraries can become the community's technology center.* As a guardian of publicly accessible information, the public library is the principal institution in the community positioned to provide access to and training for information technologies—the tools that are significantly changing the way Californians work, participate in public life, and spend their leisure time.

5. THE CALIFORNIA ECONOMY AFTER THE RECESSION

CRITICAL ISSUES

California has just undergone its severest economic downturn since the 1930s. During the early 1990s, the state lost 5% of its jobs, and state revenue declined in real terms, which meant hard times for local public libraries. In the next five years, public libraries' prospects should improve.

As California emerges from its recent recession, public libraries need to address these issues:

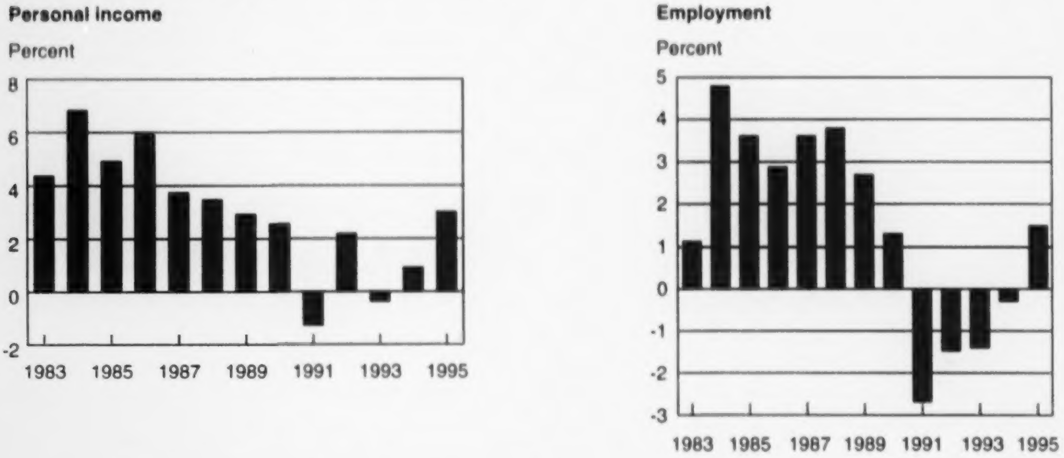
- During the recession, public officials focused on improving the climate for jobs, often ignoring the need to maintain and expand existing infrastructure such as public libraries—to avoid this predicament in the future, public libraries must articulate more clearly and widely that, like school systems, they are an important resource in troubled times.
- Income gaps are growing between those with college education and those without it—public libraries ought to be a place where both groups can find information that will increase their opportunities.
- The number of affluent, hard-working Californians is growing rapidly—public libraries should be aware of the changing needs of this critical group.
- The middle class, a traditional core supporter of the public library, is shrinking—public libraries must develop services that appeal to the broad spectrum of groups in most communities.

THE CALIFORNIA RECESSION

California has just suffered its most severe recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The state followed the country as a whole into recession in 1990–91, but failed to recover when defense cutbacks decimated the California aerospace industry. Half of the aerospace jobs in California disappeared between 1990 and 1995. And the economy was not helped by the series of natural disasters and social disruptions caused by the Loma Prieta and Northridge earthquakes, the firestorm in the Oakland hills, and the Rodney King riots. As a result, unemployment rates rose dramatically from 5% in 1990 to almost 9% in 1994, and the total number of jobs in the state declined by almost 5%. In this context, construction spending fell for both the overbuilt office market and single-family dwellings.

The poor economic performance worked its way through total spending in the state—real personal income barely grew between 1990 and 1994, and employment didn't grow again until 1995 (Figure 33). During this time, because population continued to grow, real per capita income in the state declined by 0.6% per year.

Figure 33
The Great California Recession
(Annual average rate of increase in real 1995 dollars)



Personal Income

Employment

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, *Personal Income by State*, 1995

SOME WORKERS ARE WORSE OFF

Even before the California recession, take-home pay in California was declining. The decline was driven by long-term demographic factors—the coming of age of the baby boomers, the decline in the average age of workers, the integration of women into the permanent workforce, and the rise of immigration to the state. With a large pool of new workers to choose from, employers were able to keep the rate of increase in real wages down, and real take-home pay declined in the long run (Figure 34).

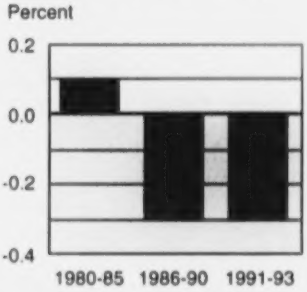
BUT SOME HOUSEHOLDS ARE BETTER OFF

Despite the decline in earnings of the individual worker, household income has risen quite dramatically and will continue to do so. This phenomenon is also a function of social change and basic demographics. With the rise of women's participation in the labor force, the number of households in California with two or more earners has risen. With two incomes, the earnings of many households are rising and will continue to do so as the baby boomers reach their peak earnings in the first years of the 21st century.

Another positive sign is that the growth of employment is highest in California in those job categories that have relatively high salaries. Movie production, health services, engineering/architecture, and management consulting are growing rapidly, with average salaries and wages well above the state average.

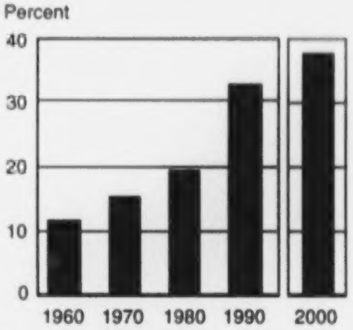
As a result, the number of households earning over $50,000 (in constant dollars) will increase by over 3% per year through the year 2000, more than twice as fast as the overall growth of households (Figure 35). Households with incomes over $50,000 will ac-

Figure 34
Real Take-Home Pay Is Falling
(Average annual percent increase after adjusting for inflation)



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, *Employment and Earnings*

Figure 35
The Percent of High-Income Households in California Has Been Growing Dramatically
(Share of households with incomes over $50,000 in 1992 dollars)



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Money Income in the United States*, 1994 count for almost 40% of all households in the state.

Overall, California has a greater share of high-income households than the rest of the country, and a smaller share of lower income households (Figure 36).

The growth of high-income households in California is important because high-income people tend to read and use computers more often and are more willing to pay to support their local public libraries.

THE MIDDLE CLASS IS SHRINKING

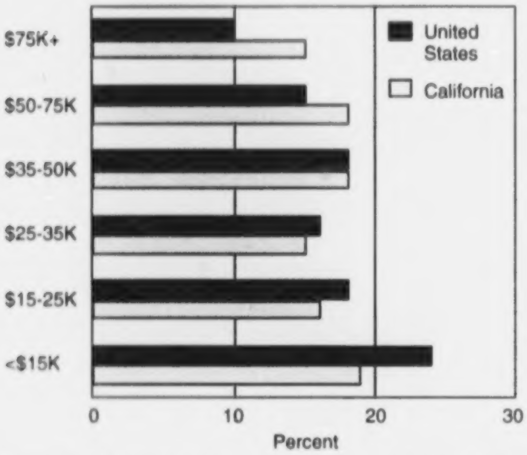
While the high-income households are growing, the middle class is shrinking, a trend driven by the economic forces at play in California—lower take-home pay per individual, greater discrepancies between high and low earners, and greater reward for those with college training. The share of the population earning between $15,000 and $50,000 (in constant dollars) has declined from 52% to 48%, a decrease of almost 8% (Figure 37).

OUTLOOK TO THE YEAR 2000

A number of important factors indicate that the dramatic dip in real personal income will not continue through the rest of the 1990s.

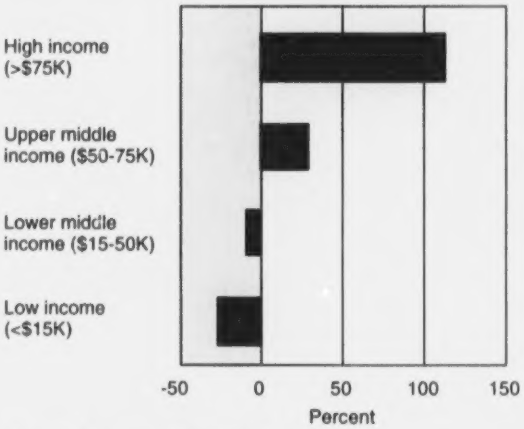
- *Aerospace.* The decline in aerospace employment seems to have reached its limit. With the winding down of the Cold War between 1990 and 1995, the number of jobs in aerospace fell from almost 350,000 in California to 150,000 at a rate of over 10% per year. While more jobs may be lost in coming years, three big aerospace companies—Lockheed, TRW, and McDonnell Douglas—are hiring. Between now and the year 2000, net job losses will be much more moderate than the dramatic losses of the previous five years, and there is some hope of breaking even or showing a moderate increase.

Figure 36
More Rich Live in California
(Share of households by income)



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of the Population*, 1990

Figure 37
The Shrinking Middle Class
(Change in shares of household income from early 1980s to early 1990s)



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

- *High technology goods.* California has long led the world in producing goods that fuel the information revolution—software, semiconductors, computer operating systems, servers, and communications equipment, among others. Now, California firms are leading the biotech revolution as well. As a result, a disproportionate share of information technology and biotechnology firms are located in California. While only 12% of the total U.S. population lives in California, the state produces 22% of information technology products and 29% of biotechnology products. This is good news for the state because the PC revolution is currently spreading from the workplace to the home market in the United States, and PC sales are picking up dramatically in Europe and Asia as well. California industries will benefit from the double-digit growth rates of these industries around the globe in the next five years.

- *Foreign trade.* World exports have been growing at twice the rate of world production for over a decade now. The demand for high-tech goods is especially strong, with recent growth rates even higher than trade as a whole—in 1994 and 1995, exports from California grew at almost 12% per year. The expanding markets of Asia and Latin America, as well as high growth in traditional markets like Canada and Europe, will drive economic growth in California for the next decade.

- *Entertainment.* Entertainment now provides more jobs—and high paying ones at that—than the aerospace industry, and continues to grow at 7% per year. The world's insatiable demand for movies, television shows, videos, and CD-ROMs will be a strong source of growth in the future.

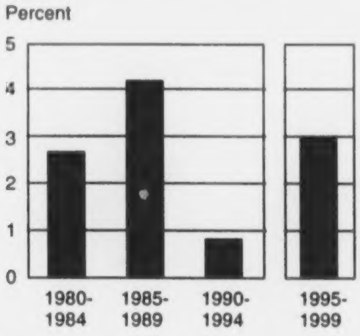
- *Tourism.* An increasing number of affluent households in the United States and other countries along the Pacific Rim have made California one of the top tourist destinations in the world. Revenues from tourism have been growing twice as fast as the overall economy for more than a decade and should continue to do so as California remains a magnet for tourists the world over.

All these factors contribute to an outlook of modest economic growth in California in the near term. Worldwide demand for software, PCs, and other electronic goods, as well as both U.S. and foreign demand for new media products (movies, TV shows, CD-ROMs, multimedia applications) will spill over into robust growth in business services and ultimately construction, two dynamic and high-paying sectors.

Business services include occupations like advertisers, lawyers, accountants, software designers, and other service companies, which will grow in support of these high-tech businesses. And California construction, after five years of very slow growth during the recession, lags well behind population growth. Demand for new housing is rising in California, and the construction industry will pick up to meet it.

With the economy on the rebound and housing starts up for the first time since 1991, look for job growth to average 2.2% through the rest of the decade. In fact, 240,000 new jobs were created in 1995. Altogether, personal income in California is likely to rise 3% per year (in constant dollars) for the rest of the decade. This rate of growth is more comparable to the early 1980s than the boom years of the late 1980s, when real growth rates averaged over 4% per year (Figure 38); nonetheless, such steady growth can only be good for the California economy.

Figure 38
Recovery in the Late 1990s
(Annual average percent increase in constant dollar personal income)



Source: IFTF

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

The California recession was long and deep. The resulting—and continuing—economic constraints are some of the biggest issues facing public libraries in the future, as are growing economic divisions in local communities. Public libraries must consider the following:

- *Jobs are the priority.* During the prolonged California recession, politicians worked to keep taxes down to create an attractive climate for new businesses. This skewed priorities and produced severe fiscal constraints on key parts of the infrastructure like schools and public libraries. During such periods, public libraries must be sensitive to the fears about jobs and limited opportunities and must work to position itself as playing a key role in building a healthy economy for the 21st century.

- *User groups are splitting in two.* The number of traditional middle-class families that have long been the backbone of support for public library services is shrinking. The two groups of the California population growing most quickly are the well-educated, upper-income households, and the less well-educated, modest-income households. These two groups look to the public library to fulfill very different needs, and public libraries must provide services that accommodate both.

- *The middle class is shrinking.* The share of middle-income Californians is declining as a percentage of the total. Traditionally, these citizens use the public library heavily and support extra expenditures. Public libraries must figure out how to continue providing services for this group while adapting to the growing needs of other groups.

- *There are more—and more demanding—affluent households.* The number of high-income households is growing rapidly. The special characteristics of these households—greater discretion in their purchasing decisions, a wider range of choices, more demands in the workplace, less time for family and community—will influence the direction of library services. Public libraries must adapt their services to this demanding but supportive group.

6. THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF CALIFORNIA BUSINESS

CRITICAL ISSUES

As in the U.S. economy as a whole, the service sector is growing faster than the manufacturing sector in the California economy. To compete in the expanding world market, both California's service and manufacturing industries use leading-edge technologies and demand up-to-date knowledge of world cultures. Thus, an increasing share of the jobs in the state require technological sophistication and an appreciation of the differences in markets around the globe, both of which require training and experience.

California's shift to services, its growing reliance on the world market, and the effect of both on jobs in the state present public libraries with a range of issues:

- California industries must adapt quickly to meet the changing global demands for new technology goods and applications, which means workers must be flexible and quick to learn new skills—public libraries must provide community members with a chance for lifelong learning that will help them ride the waves of change.

- California industries may design and produce new technologies, but often it's California's citizens who adapt these technologies to meet the applications of daily life—public libraries should give their diverse citizenry opportunities to experiment with new information technologies for a variety of needs.

- California's industries lead the world in producing new media—public libraries can support this leadership by including graphics, pictures, CD-ROMs, and moving images in their collections.

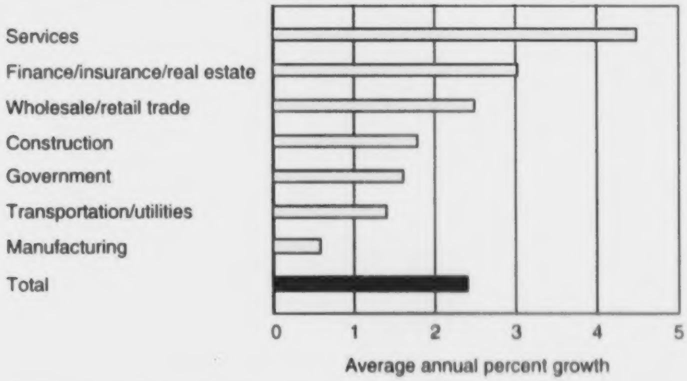
- Increasingly, California industries are turning to the rest of the world to find new markets—public libraries can provide resources to educate California citizens about world cultures.

SERVICES ARE KING

Historically, the composition of California's industries has often changed quite dramatically in a relatively short time: gold brought the first mass migrations, but agriculture, forestry, oil, movies, and now electronics have created major new industries in rapid succession.

The most dramatic change in recent decades has been the dynamic growth of the service sector. The service sector is tremendously varied, and includes personal services such as auto repair and laundry, entertainment such as movie and TV production, business consulting such as accounting, advertising, and software development, and professional services such as legal counsel and health care. In the last 25 years, the service sector has grown at twice the rate of the economy as a whole and seven times the rate of the manufacturing sector (Figure 39). It now employs over 3.5 million people

Figure 39
The Service Sector Is the Leading Source of Growth in California (Average annual percent growth, 1972–1994)



Source: *Economic Report of the Governor*, 1995, Table 5 and accounts for 30% of all jobs in California. By contrast, in 1972, it employed 1.4 million people and accounted for only 19% of all jobs.

In the 25 years the service sector has been expanding, the profile of California's industries has changed quite dramatically. For example, three out of five of California's fastest growing service industries changed rankings in that time (Table 6). The only sure thing in the future is that this profile will change again just as dramatically. The big winners in the service industries break down into seven categories (Table 7).

A number of fundamental drivers suggest that these sectors will continue to grow in the near future. The rising number of higher income households will push up the demand for services driven be discretionary income, such as health care, tourism, and entertainment. The rapidly expanding global market will maintain the growth of tourism and demand for California-based software products. The world-leading position of California's high-tech and entertainment industries will keep California's products in great demand and foster the professional and business services that work closely with these industries—research, consulting, legal counsel, and personnel.

MANUFACTURING AT THE CORE

To a large extent, the growth of the service sector still depends on the continuing prosperity of the manufacturing sector. Much of the service sector—legal counsel, consulting, personnel, software—provide services that manufacturing firms use in the course of their production and distribution. Others—entertainment and health—depend on an overall healthy business sector that provides jobs and high incomes.

While the state's manufacturing sector has taken a big hit with the sharp decline in defense-related aerospace in the early 1990s, a vibrant and growing

Table 6
Changes in California's Leading Service Industries, 1970–1995
(Based on payroll)

1970	*1995*
Movies	Computer services
Architects/engineers	Personnel supply
Hotels	Lawyers
Auto repair	Movies
Laundries	Architects/engineers

Source: *California Statistical Abstract*

Table 7
Largest and Fastest Growing Service Sectors

	Thousands of Employees	*Annual Average Growth Rate*
Health care	536	1.4
Tourism	553	3.0
Entertainment/amusement	322	3.9
Personnel supply services	267	8.0
Business research and consulting	205	1.4
Software	139	8.5
Legal services	133	4.0

Source: *California Statistical Abstract*, 1995, Table K-12 high-technology sector remains, with its high average salaries. The computer industry in California, for example, provides more jobs at higher pay than any other state's computer sector (Table 8).

This high-tech sector sells an increasing portion of its goods to growing world markets, as do other California manufacturers. As a result, California accounts for about 12% of the total U.S. population but about 16% of total exports. In recent years, California's exports to the rest of the world have been growing at 16% per year.

In response to the flourishing worldwide market in computers, semiconductors, communications equipment, and high-tech instrumentation, California's high-tech sector is likely to continue to grow rapidly in the next decade. But the high-tech industry is only one of a group of high-performing manufacturing industries in the state (Table 9).

With its flair for designing clothes and sportswear reflecting the California lifestyle, for example, the apparel industry has taken off, maintaining its growth by using point-of-sale information technologies and a flexible labor force to respond quickly to market shifts. Likewise, the food industry has turned to more specialized products, such as grapes, nuts, fruits, vegetables, and flowers, with broader value-added markets . And the printing industry has flourished in an environment where the sophisticated printed word (special-purpose magazines, advertising, manuals) has grown hand in hand with enhanced electronics and desktop publishing.

All in all, California's industries are well placed for the world's most rapidly growing markets. They have also proved themselves flexible enough to adapt to whatever changes are likely to arise in the future.

Table 8
California's High-Tech Payroll Is the Nation's Largest
(Top five states' total computer payroll in billions of dollars)

	Dollars
California	13.7
Texas	4.0
Massachusetts	3.3
New York	3.0
Virginia	2.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *County Business Patterns*

Table 9
The Manufacturing Core in California

	Employment (Thousands)	*Average Growth 1994–2004*
High-Tech Sector		
Computer	84	3.0
Electronic components	120	3.5
Communications equipment	91	2.5
Aerospace	127	1.0
Scientific/precision instruments	111	2.5
Other Dynamic Industries		
Food	178	1.3
Apparel	142	3.0
Printing/publishing	152	1.5

Source: IFTF; derived from data in *Economic Report of the Governor*, 1995

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

To help keep California competitive in world markets,

public libraries must address a unique set of issues:

- *Learning skills.* In industries that change what they do and how they do it quickly and dramatically, successful workers will be those that can change just as quickly, that can develop whole new sets of skills as necessary. Public libraries can help by functioning as community centers for lifelong learning. Working hand in hand with local employers, they can provide critical resources to help workers change with the times.

- *A leader in new media.* California industries are helping build equipment, applications, and content for a world market for new media (movies, TV, CD-ROMs, video games, online information). This means that Californians are more aware of and sensitive to the formats of graphically oriented media. Public libraries should lead the community in helping both young and old partake of these evolving technologies.

- *High-tech users.* A small portion of people in California actually design and build new technologies, but a large portion use the new technologies in new settings to perform new tasks. Public libraries can help the public grow familiar with the new technologies by enabling them to experiment with a variety of applications.

- *World-oriented outlook.* California manufacturers are selling an increasing portion of their goods on world markets. To this end, not just manufacturers but all "support" workers in law, research, consulting, advertising, and marketing must develop a growing appreciation of different cultures. Public libraries can play a key role in educating communities about the wider world we live and work in.

7. A NEW PARADIGM FOR WORK

CRITICAL ISSUES

To make it through the recent recession, many California firms downsized and reengineered, changing the way workers do their jobs. As a result, a large number of Californians now work under a new paradigm, a paradigm that requires workers to have a wide range of skills, to be increasingly independent and self-motivated, and to be technically sophisticated. This trend affects a wide range of workers, from those who work independently from a corporate office or workstation, to those who work as temporary or contract workers, to those who work in their own one-person companies.

Changing work styles raise several issues relevant to the local public library.

- More than half the new jobs created in California are knowledge based and demand an educated, flexible labor force—as the traditional keepers of knowledge, libraries can support the new labor force by updating traditional resources such as books and periodicals and installing cutting-edge information technologies.

- A surprisingly high share of workers either take work home with them or work from home—public libraries can offer important resources for this sophisticated, highly educated group.

- Home office workers tend to be better educated, better off, and involved in community activities—public libraries should foster the friendship of this valuable community support group.

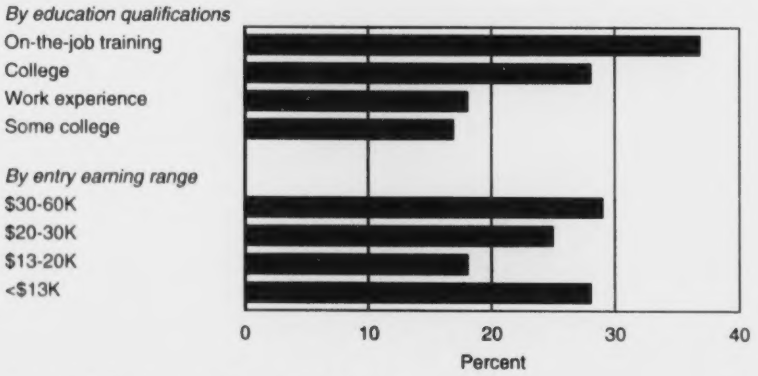
THE NEW JOB: KNOWLEDGE WORKER

A good portion of California's new jobs in the last decade have been professional, managerial, or sales. Most of these require "knowledge workers"; that is, the jobs involve the manipulation of information—entering, analyzing, or reacting to data—and generally require a college degree or some amount of college training. They also tend to pay well (Figure 40).

While the fastest growing new jobs are the high-paying knowledge jobs, the second fastest growing share are at the other end of the spectrum—jobs that don't pay well at all. These are low-skill jobs, with high turnover, that rely primarily on on-the-job training to keep workers up to par. The only real requirement for these jobs is to be able to adapt to the needs of the job on the fly.

Both sets of new jobs have an important characteristic in common—the need for flexibility. With relatively high unemployment rates in California, California companies can afford to be choosy about the workers they hire. Because new jobs are increasingly knowledge based, companies look for recruits with flexibility and a broad range of skills and work styles at both the higher and the lower ends. The jobs in the middle—high-skilled blue-collar jobs—are the ones getting harder to find. (As mentioned in Section 5, "The California Economy After the Recession," this trend is shrinking the middle class that has shown such staunch support for public services like libraries.)

Figure 40
New Jobs Require Education and Pay Well
(Share of new jobs 1983–93)



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, *Monthly Labor Review*, June 1995

WORK AT HOME: AN EMERGING ACTIVITY FOR AFFLUENT CALIFORNIANS

One of the dramatic outcomes of the increasing demand for flexibility in the workplace is the large number of Californians who do some work at home. Currently, about 30% of all Californians (or 43% of employed Californians) work at home some of the time in some fashion—run their own business from home, take work home at night, or work part-time at home (Table 10).

Californians who work at home are a unique breed—they have higher incomes, are well educated, and have increasing experience with technology (Figure 41).

Employees are primarily responsible for creating their own work settings at home. Almost 70% of them pay the full costs for their technology and equipment themselves (Figure 42).

Those who work at home are more likely to use information heavily, including the public library (Table 11). They are also eager to learn and continue to learn throughout their careers. More than two-thirds of them strongly agree that they have to learn new things continually to keep up with their jobs (Figure 43).

Table 10
A Large Share of Californians Work at Home
(Share of all Californians)

Telecommute	6
Operate a home business	7
Take Work Home	18
Total	**30**

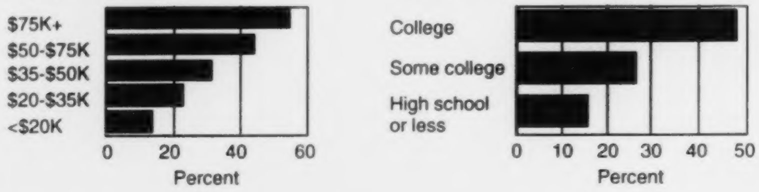
Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Table 11
People Who Work From Home Are Heavy Information Users
(All Californians = 100)

Have a computer modem	176
Have access to online account	174
Have a computer at home	149
Participate in community activities (e.g., vote, volunteer)	147
Have an answering machine	117
Read books frequently	113
Use the library more than once a month	112

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

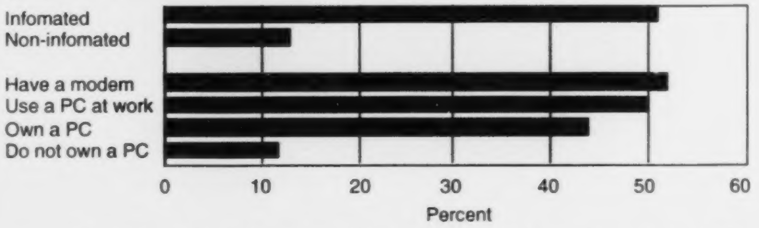
Figure 41
Californians Who Work at Home Tend to Have . . .



Higher Incomes . . .
(Household income distribution of those who work at home)

Higher Levels of Education . . .
(Educational attainment of those who work at home)

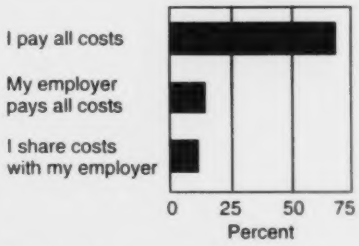
And More Experience With Technology
(Distribution of technology use of those who work at home)



Note: An "infomated" household is one that uses five of eight of the following technologies: VCR, cell phone, laser disc player, answering machine, computer, fax, voice mail, or CD player.

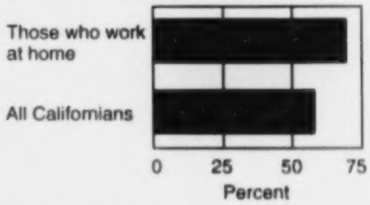
Source: Field Research, California Public Library Survey, 1995

Figure 42
Employees Foot the Bill



Source: IFTF, *Work Space Survey*, April 1994

Figure 43
To Keep Up at My Job, I Have to Learn New Things All the Time
(Percent who agree strongly)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

Because more Californians are working at home, and these workers tend to support community activities, libraries will have to consider how best to serve them. The following are important issues:

- *The workplace is changing.* Libraries must stay informed about the rapid changes in the workplace that may affect the type of public library services needed by the community. Currently, an increasing portion of Californians work at least part time at home. This opens an opportunity for public libraries to offer new resources to their communities.

- *Home office workers are sophisticated library users.* Workers who work at home are sophisticated public library users—they are generally well educated, affluent, and heavy users of technology. To serve their needs, public libraries must provide fairly advanced and specialized resources, such as electronic catalogues, online reference materials, and broadband services that include such things as video conferencing.

- *Home office workers are lifelong learners who support public libraries.* Those who work at home are more likely to see themselves as lifelong learners, and are more likely than the average citizen to read books, use the library, and support community activities. For libraries, this group is both a key constituency for new public library services and a target for winning community support for libraries overall.

- *Public libraries must serve everyone.* Still, library services dedicated solely to this group of home office workers may exclude many other Californians. As users of the public library grow more diverse in income, education, technology experience, language, and so on, public libraries will have to grow more creative in using their finite resources to serve the whole community and to find ways of partnering with other important agencies that have common goals.

8. FINANCING THE STATE'S PUBLIC NEEDS

CRITICAL ISSUES

The public sector suffered dramatically from the California recession. Hit especially hard was the state government, whose real dollar revenues virtually stopped growing between 1990 and 1995. During that time, demands to finance health care, welfare, and crime programs established new priorities for spending available funds. Although public revenues are now picking up, it will take a long time before the state makes up for the recession's shortfalls. Public libraries must address a number of issues brought on by the shifts in public spending:

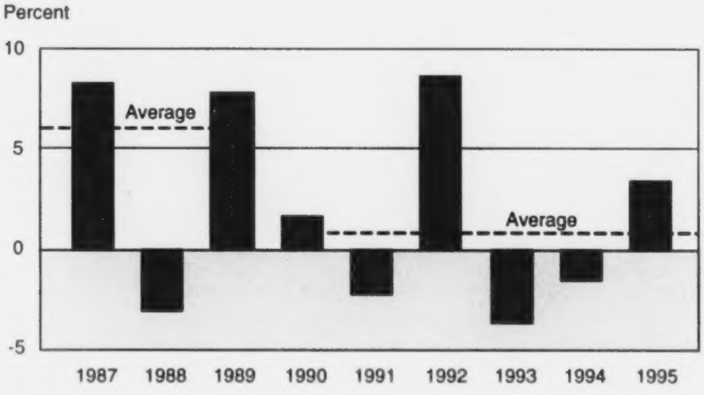
- During the California recession, public revenues grew very slowly—so they don't get cut out of the policy loop, public libraries must articulate the value of their services to communities that are reengineering public programs.
- Surveys showed that, during the recession, Californians were more concerned about fundamental issues like jobs, income, and crime than about "less pressing" issues like education and public libraries—public libraries must define *and communicate* the importance of their role in the community's economic health and find partners to leverage that role.
- The state budget outlook is improving—public libraries must create a cutting-edge vision of what they will do for their communities when they receive more money.

STATE AND LOCAL REVENUES GREW SLOWLY DURING THE RECESSION

State and local budgets suffered severely during the recession. Because state and local government revenues depend on the number of jobs in the state, income gains, and current retail sales, public budgets are especially sensitive to swings in the business cycle. In fact, they tend to exaggerate the cycle, rising a little faster during periods of expansion, falling dramatically during periods of recession.

During the boom years of the late 1980s, state revenues grew by 5.5% per year in constant dollars. During the recent California recession, from 1990 through 1994, state revenues grew by only 0.5% per year in constant dollars. A modest recovery began in 1995 (Figure 44).

Figure 44
Real State Revenues Grew More Slowly During the Recession
(Annual rate of change in constant dollars)



Source: California Department of Finance

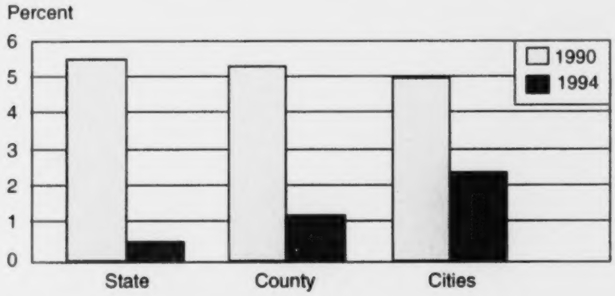
While local government revenues did not fall as much as state revenues, the growth in real income at all levels of government decreased. Of local government agencies, counties were especially hard hit (Figure 45).

Before the recession, California's state and local governments received about 5% more revenue from local tax sources than the national average, but by the end of the recession they received slightly less.

During the period in which the state and local budgets were growing very slowly, the state's spending priorities were changing as well. State spending as dictated by voters and policymakers rose to meet growing special needs: the growth in violent crime, the much larger number of unemployed and welfare recipients, the higher costs of public health programs, the special demands of the immigrant population on schools, and the unexpected emergency requirements of earthquakes, fires, and floods.

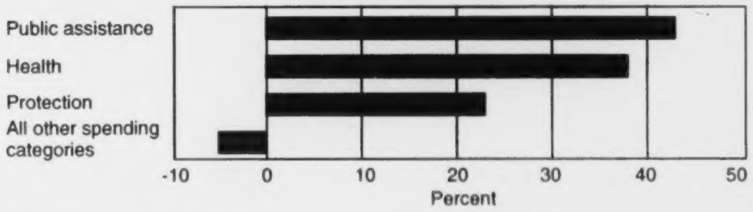
This put severe pressure on all levels of government to allocate fairly the scarce funds required to maintain a number of existing programs, especially those that involve longer term investments. As a result, state spending decreased in such areas as assistance to local governments, education, and resources.

Figure 45
Local Government Revenue Growth Is Down
(Average annual percent change in constant dollars)



Source: California State Controller's Office

Figure 46
Counties' Spending Priorities Get More Focused
(Change in share of additional county expenditures, 1990–1994)



Source: California State Controller

LOCAL PRIORITIES CHANGE

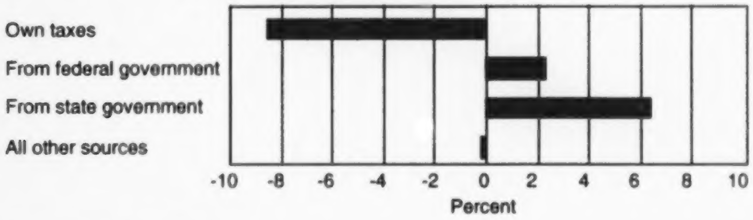
Pressures are growing on local governments to direct funds into mandated programs or programs that have strong political support at the state level. For example, while county income rose at a modest pace between 1990 and 1994, all additional funds went into three program areas—health care, public protection, and public assistance (Figure 46). The amount available for other types of spending, including support for public libraries and education, fell.

Many changes in priorities at the local level were driven by changes at the state level. The state passed laws that shifted more local property taxes to schools. At the same time, the state increased state grants to counties but tied the grants to specific programs. This reduced the counties' own sources of revenue sharply, and with it their ability to respond to local needs. The share of county revenues from their own tax sources fell by almost 25% (Figure 47).

THE OUTLOOK IS MUCH IMPROVED

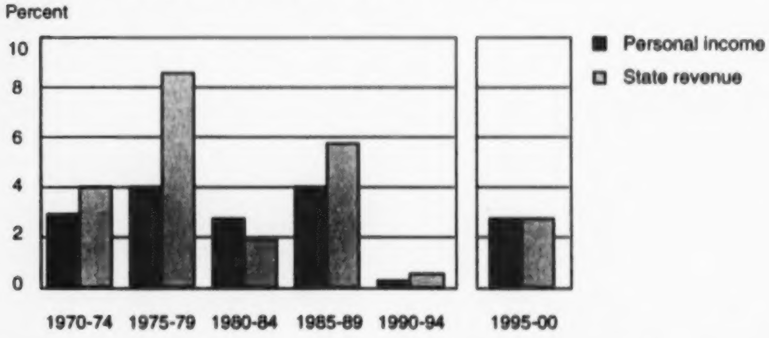
As real income recovers, however, state and local revenues should recover as well. Already, state budget revenues are showing a gain of more than 3% for 1995. Look for modest real growth rates through 2000 (Figure 48).

Figure 47
County Sources of Revenues Shift, 1990–1994
(Change in share of revenues for California counties)



Source: California State Controller

Figure 48
Revenue Recovers with Personal Income
(Annual average percent change in constant dollars)



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Bureau of the Census, and California State Department of Finance

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

With public funding priorities changing, public libraries must remember the following:

- *Memories of the recession will be strong.* All levels of government experienced the impact of the prolonged recession. All spent five years dealing with very slow revenue growth and allocating the scarce funds among competing claims. Public libraries must show the relevance and value of their services to communities with limited public resources.

- *Libraries are competing with other claims.* Californians have repeatedly expressed through surveys their great concern with certain issues: crime, drugs, schools, jobs, health care, the environment, and traffic congestion. In periods of constrained budgets, these issues win battles for scarce funds. Thus, the public libraries' share of the total amount of resources available fell during the recession. Public libraries need to articulate the role of the public library in the 21st century community, find new roles that meet community needs, and find partners that will help them leverage these roles.

- *Be prepared for better times.* The worst years of the California recession are over, and public budgets are beginning to grow again. Public libraries must aggressively and clearly articulate new visions of what they can do for local communities as revenues begin to grow again and more money becomes available for public services.

9. INFORMATION SEARCHING IN CALIFORNIA

CRITICAL ISSUES

Californians are as varied in their information searching activities as they are in other aspects of their lives. While many spend little time searching for information, others spend a good deal of time and effort doing so. Heavy information searchers tend to have high incomes, high levels of education, and access to information technology. They are also more likely to use the public library.

Who has access to information and how they go about getting it are important issues for California's public libraries.

- Californians with higher income and education tend to be the heaviest users of information—public libraries should build a broader appreciation of information throughout the community.
- Many Californians experiment with a variety of alternative channels for gathering and using information—these people tend to use the public library heavily, and libraries should work to earn and maintain their support.
- Most Californians get the bulk of their information from the private sector in their roles as consumers—public libraries should carefully track how these exchanges take place and, more important, how they shape the way people expect to search for and receive information.

CALIFORNIANS SEARCH FOR A VARIETY OF INFORMATION

Californians search for many different kinds of information, some for practical, day-to-day activities and others highly specialized. According to a 1995 statewide survey of California adults, Californians most often search for information concerning four broad categories: health and medicine, major household purchases, vacation planning, and home repairs, in that order (Table 12). The last three are practical, day-to-day needs, likely to be fulfilled. Health and medical information, however, concern much more complex questions, sometimes with few concrete answers, and the searches are much less likely to be fulfilled. The prominence of health and medical issues can be attributed to the aging of the baby boom generation, a growing frustration and confusion with the changes in the health care delivery system, and the increasing number of young families with children.

Californians as a whole run the gamut of information searching activities. Of the 11 items mentioned in the questionnaire, two-thirds of Californians identified between 1 and 5 areas for which they searched for information;

Table 12
Californians' Information Priorities
(Percent who looked for information on . . .)

A medical or health concern	40
Purchasing something big for your household	37
Planning a vacation or recreational activity for your family	36
Home repair or improvements	35
Learning or updating a skill for your job or your own personal growth, such as a refresher course or extension school	32
Helping a friend or family member through a crisis	30
Your hobbies or personal interests	29
A legal situation such as those involving an accident, employment, divorce, real estate, or a new business venture	28
Housing or transportation available in your community	19
Managing your household budget or personal finances	16
Parenting concerns such as raising your children	15

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

about 20% identified six or more areas; 16% identified none (Figure 49).

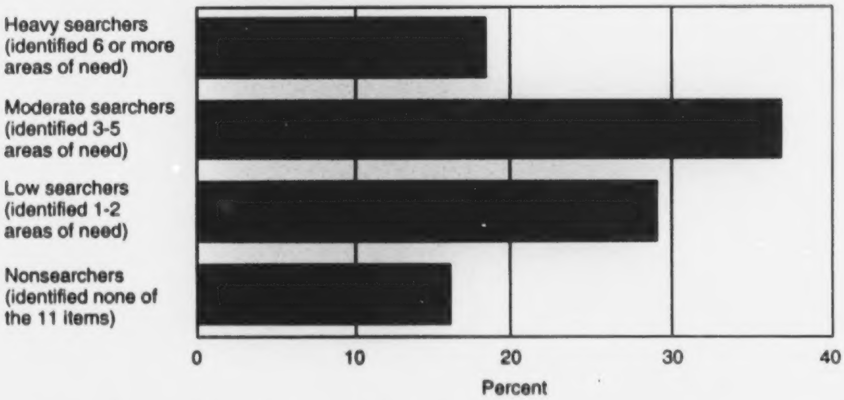
HEAVY SEARCHERS: AN ACQUIRED, SELF-REINFORCING SKILL

Information searching may in fact be an acquired and self-reinforcing skill. Californians who search for a large amount of information (that is, they indicated a high number of information searches in the survey) tend to have higher household incomes, higher levels of education, and greater experience with technology at home and work. Their information-seeking behavior appears to derive from an awareness that information is useful and available. They are part of an information-seeking cycle—when they need information, they are more likely to look for it because they know how to.

Three times as many Californians with incomes over $75,000 are heavy information searchers as those with incomes under $20,000. Likewise, those with a college education are two and a half times more likely to be heavy information searchers than those with only a high school diploma (Figures 50 and 51).

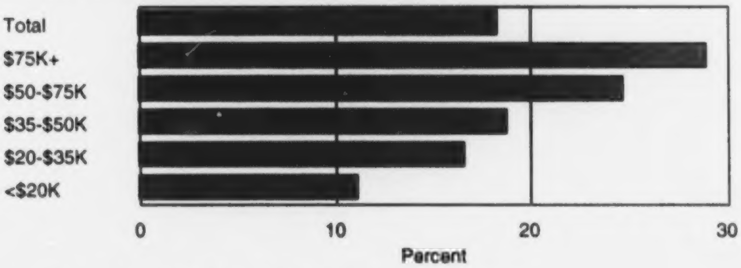
Another strong indicator of information use is technology experience. Californians who own and use a vari-

Figure 49
Californians' Searching Activities Run the Gamut
(Share of all California adults)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 50
Heavy Information Searching Increases with Income
(Percent of heavy information searchers in each category)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

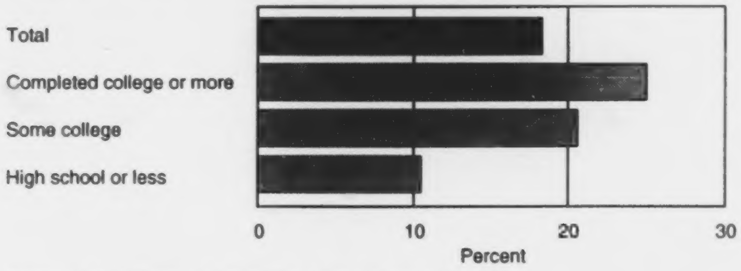
ety of new information technologies at home are more than twice as likely as the general population to be heavy information searchers (Figure 52).

While 27% of those who live in infomated households are heavy information searchers, only 10% of those without a PC at work and 7% of those who are not infomated are heavy information searchers. That is not to say that those who don't use technology don't use information. Rather, in an environment such as work, school, or home in which technology is accessible, information is likely to be considered a valuable and accessible resource.

It's a self-reinforcing loop: a technology-rich environment promotes the value of information, the ongoing need for more information drives the use of technology, and technology facilitates information gathering, which promotes the value of information, and so forth. The important point is that information-seeking behavior seems to emerge as much from the awareness of information as a resource as from access to technology.

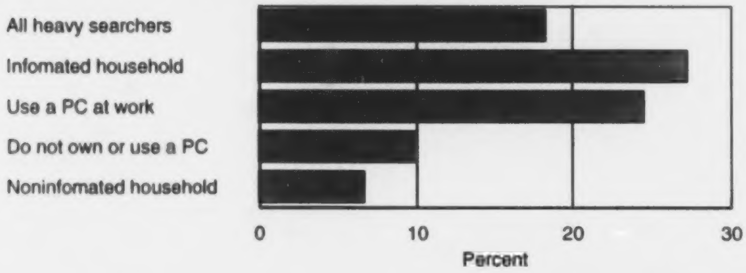
SOURCES OF INFORMATION SEARCHES
Despite their generally broad experience with technology, Californians continue to use a variety of sources of

Figure 51
Heavy Information Searching Increases with Education
(Percent of heavy information searchers in each category)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 52
Heavy Information Searching Increases with Technology Experience
(Percent of those who are heavy information searchers)



Note: An "infomated" household is one that has five of eight of the following technologies: VCR, cell phone, laser disc player, answering machine, computer, fax, voice mail, or CD player.

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

information. In fact, Californians' rely on printed forms of information more than one might think. Over 80% read newspapers regularly, two-thirds read magazines regularly, and almost 50% read books and refer to the *Yellow Pages* (Figure 53).

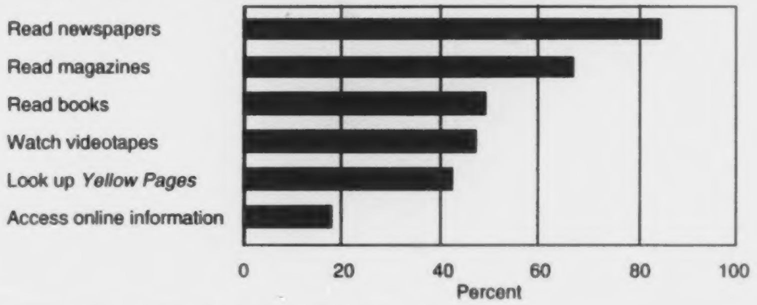
In addition to these traditional sources, however, Californians use a wide variety of "alternative" sources to search for information, including phones, public libraries, kiosks, pamphlets from public agencies, faxes, and computers (Table 13). The most frequent alternative sources are computers, faxes, and phones.

Californians who use alternative media such as faxes, PCs, kiosks, and telephones for gathering information and making transactions are more likely to be heavy information searchers. Alternative media users are 50% more likely than the general population to search for at least six types of information in a given year (Figure 54).

LOCAL INSTITUTIONS AS SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Another important factor that influences information gathering activities

Figure 53
Californians Are Readers
(Percent who . . . at least once a week)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Table 13
Californians Use a Variety of Strategies to Obtain Information and Make Transactions
Question: About how often have you . . .
(Percent of all California adults who have . . .)

	At least once a year	*More than once a month*
Requested written material, such as pamphlets, newsletters, or product information, to be mailed to your house?	65	8
Used the phone to purchase something?	60	11
Gone to a central location (library, post office, city hall) to pick up community newsletters or other written material on community services, elections, or product information?	55	8
Used a fax machine to request and retrieve news, directions, product brochures, or other information?	43	17
Used a self-service electronic kiosk in a public location (mall, library, airport, hotel) to get information, directions, or store/restaurant listings?	42	5
Used a computer to look up information about current events, weather, investments, or products/services?	36	16
Used the phone to pay bills?	6	3

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

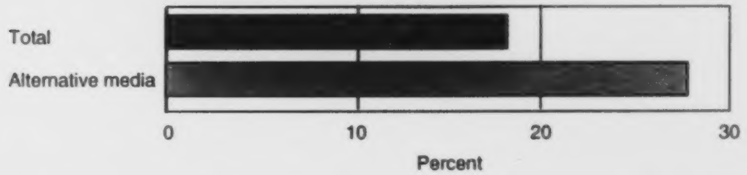
of specific groups is the type of local institutions these groups use most often and the way these institutions disseminate information. Experiences with institutions shape views and expectations about information accessibility, timeliness of delivery, format, and cost.

Specifically, a good majority of respondents search for information in the private sector, with its fast and efficient technologies and customer-friendly attitudes. Another group of Californians, however, get much of their information from public service agencies, which are more bureaucratic and paper-based. The experience of each of these groups will determine its information-seeking profile: whether they search for information in the first place, what kind of information they search for, where they go to get it, and what tools they use.

Currently, a majority of respondents turn most often to private business professionals to get their information, but almost one-quarter of respondents use social services agencies (Figure 55).

Some groups of Californians are more likely than others to use certain

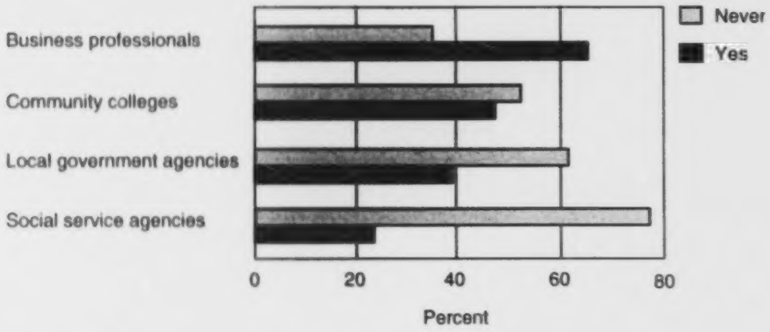
Figure 54
Californians Who Use Alternative Media Are Heavy Information Seekers
(Percent of heavy information searchers in each category)



Note: Alternative media users are those who use at least two of five electronic media—a fax, computer, or electronic kiosk to find information, a telephone to pay a bill, or the TV to shop for a product.

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 55
More Californians Interact with the Private Sector for Information and Assistance
(Percent of respondents who do and do not use the following resources)

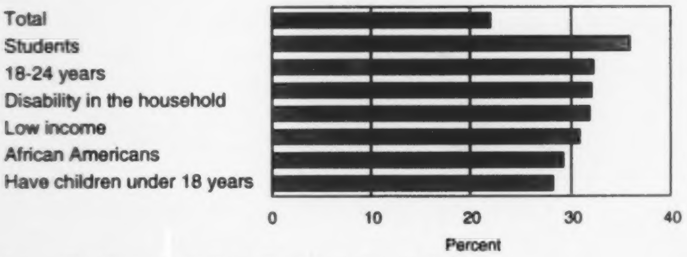


Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

agencies and institutions in their local communities. African Americans and low-income Californians, for instance, are less likely to seek out private businesses for assistance and information and more likely to interact with social service agencies (Figure 56). White and more affluent populations overwhelmingly deal with local governments and private sector institutions where providing information may be more electronic and streamlined (Figures 57, 58, and 59).

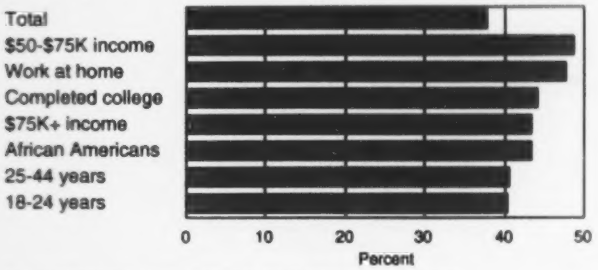
Each group's experience with institutions will influence its information-seeking behavior. Those accustomed to receiving information via fax-on-demand from a commercial service, for example, may come to expect this type of service from local public agencies as well. And those used to dealing with the public sector may not even be aware of other sources of information, and how effective they can be. Public libraries must keep these differences in mind as they develop their new wave of services—given finite resources, they must come up with a way to meet the needs of both groups.

Figure 56
Social Service Agencies Focus on the Young, Low Income, and Minority Groups (Percent)



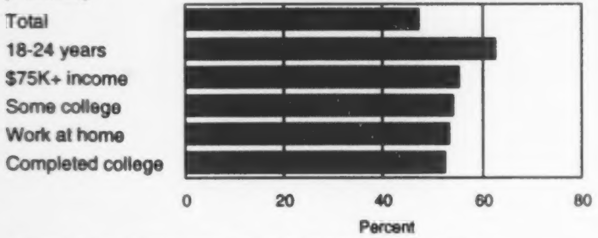
Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 57
Local Government Services Are Used Most Often by the Affluent (Percent)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 58
The Young, Educated, and Affluent Interact Most Often with Educational Institutions (Percent)



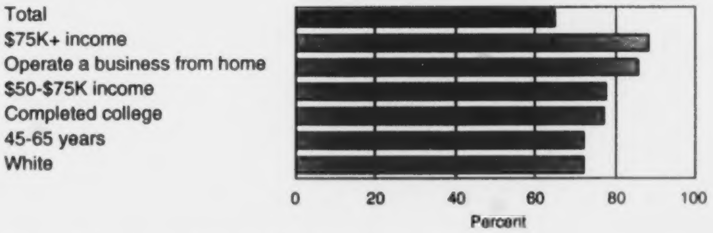
Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

INFORMATION SEARCHERS ARE PUBLIC LIBRARY USERS

Both those who have access to a wide variety of technologies and those who use a variety of alternative media for information searches or commercial transactions are likely to be heavy library users as well. Alternative media users are 40% more likely to use the library frequently, while those who have access to online services are 25% more likely (Figure 60).

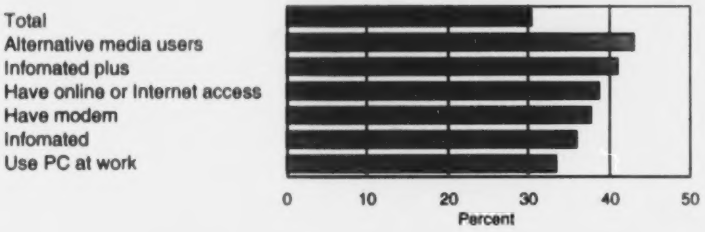
So far, the presence of technology in the home doesn't appear to encourage households to bypass the public library. As technology and information appliances become cheaper and more readily available, however, and library users grow used to quick access to relevant information, they may begin to substitute these new alternatives for public library visits. This is an important issue to track—many Californians already use alternative media to get information and conduct financial transactions, and if an exodus from the public libraries does occur, California public libraries will be hit particularly hard.

Figure 59
The Affluent and Educated Frequently Interact with Business Professionals (Percent)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 60
Experience with Technology and Alternative Media Encourages Heavy Library Usage (Percent)



Note: An "infomated" household is one that uses five of eight of the following technologies: VCR, cell phone, laser disc player, answering machine, computer, fax, voice mail, or CD player; an "infomated plus" household is one that uses six of the eight.

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

How diverse groups of Californians search for information raises many critical, strategic issues for public libraries.

- *Public libraries must offer more than one way to seek information.* Library users will show a range of technology experience. Some will be sophisticated users, while others will be familiar with only traditional sources. To meet the needs of everyone, libraries must work to provide their resources through several channels and formats.

- *Information searching is shaped by private as well as public institutions.* Some populations in the state are more likely to get information from private sources and some more likely to get it from public institutions. These experiences shape the groups' expectations about levels of service and availability of information and services. The library will have to understand how access to other public and private institutions in the local community influences people's likelihood and readiness to use services.

- *Information searching is self-reinforcing.* Information-seeking behavior is related to income, education, and technology experience, all of which influence awareness of and access to library services. Such behaviors tend to be self-reinforcing. Libraries ought to encourage information-seeking activities by helping people develop basic skills for using information for personal and community decision-making as well as entertainment, leisure, and work-related activities.

- *Public libraries must meet the needs of both low and high searchers.* The educated, affluent, and technology-experienced are more likely to be aware of information resources and thus more likely to use them. However, low information searching does not correspond to low library usage. Libraries will need to cater to the needs of both high and low searchers and provide technology access that is meaningful to both groups.

- *Technology isn't the only way.* Technology does not replace other forms of obtaining information or making transactions. In fact, Californians use a wide range of information options, and the library is included on their list of preferred venues, especially by those who are heavy users of the greatest variety of information services.

10. EQUITABLE ACCESS TO INFORMATION

CRITICAL ISSUES

Because California's population is so diverse, different groups have different expectations and needs for information, as well as different levels of access. Factors such as language, income, education, and technology experience shape the context in which individuals search for information—whether they look for information in the first place, where they look for information, and how they go about it.

The diversity of information access and behaviors in the community will force local public libraries to examine four strategic issues:

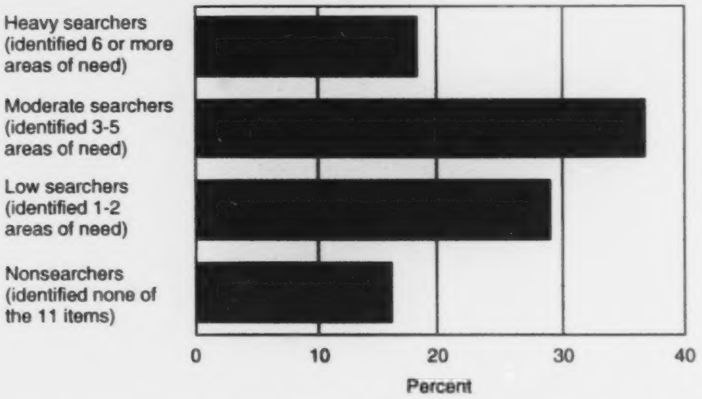
- Survey respondents show large variances in the type of information they search for and how they search—public libraries must acknowledge their communities' diversity and work to meet the whole range of needs.
- The heaviest information users are also the ones who express the greatest frustration about not finding what they need—public libraries must move rapidly to resolve these obvious and clear frustrations or risk losing the support of this critical group.
- Those who don't speak English at home are much less inclined to search actively for information—public libraries must reach out to linguistic minorities, not only with materials in the represented languages, but also with clear directions and even programs on the process of information gathering itself.
- Too many Californians don't search for information at all—although public libraries can't force information on people who don't want to use it, they must work to make sure they provide access to information for those who want it but currently are cut out of the process.

VARIANCES IN INFORMATION SEARCHING

As might be expected given the state's diverse population, Californians show a wide range of information searching activities. What's true across the board is that a significant majority of Californians search for information in some shape or form: 84% of the survey's respondents state that they sought help in at least one of the eleven categories of needs identified on the state survey; 55% sought information in at least three of the eleven (Figure 61).

Though most respondents searched for some kind of information, information searching activities varied dramatically by sociodemographic char-

Figure 61
Californians Search for Information
(Percent of all California adults)



Note: An information search is counted as any Californian who responded *yes* to the survey question "Did you ask for information or help about this issue area over the past year?" The list of 11 areas is included in Table 12 of Issue 9.

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

acteristics. While the population as a whole showed the most interest in medical issues, for example, subgroups showed a remarkable variation in searching for medical information. Almost half of those with a disability searched for medical information during the year, while only a quarter of those who do not speak English as their primary language did (Table 14). Low-income and Hispanic Californians are also less likely to look for medical information. Surprisingly, given their growing use of health care services in general, the elderly were slightly less likely to search for medical information than the population as a whole.

Another issue area that scored consistently high across all groups was information related to learning something new or updating skills to succeed at work (for more on this subject, see Issue 11). Thirty-two percent of the population searched for information on this area in the last 12 months. Indeed, nearly 32% of virtually every socioeconomic subgroup expressed such a need. The variance occurred in the relative rank of updating skills among the other issue areas (Table 15).

The conclusion is that subgroups value the issue areas differently, and that, within each community, each issue must be weighed from the point of view of a subgroup. In other words, it is just as important for libraries to consider the qualitative value subgroups put on categories of information as it is to go by the numbers. Public libraries can do this only by continually reaching out to the different groups to gauge how well their needs are being met.

Some groups will take more effort to reach than others, even within ethnic subgroups. For instance, Hispanics who chose to be interviewed in English responded to the survey questions much like the average Californian. Those who chose to do the interview in Spanish did not look for information and assistance as much as other Hispanic subgroups (Figure 62).

Asian subgroups showed the same pattern. Those who conducted the interview in English were much more likely to be heavy information searchers; those who preferred an interview in a language other than English were much more likely not to search for information as aggressively (Figure 63).

These quite different patterns within key California ethnic groups raise a question: What are the key determinants of information-seeking behavior—topic, language, income, cultural background, or all of these? All groups seem to search for the same types of information, but those interviewed in their native language searched for less information across the board. This suggests that the level of acculturation, especially English proficiency, is more important in determining who will search for information than the topic of the search.

INFORMATION GAPS

Not all Californians are satisfied with the information they find—26% of

Table 14
Some Groups Are More Interested in Health Care Than Others
(Percent of group who look for information on medical or health concerns)

	Percent
Total population	**40**
Disability	49
White	44
65 or older	39
African American	39
Asian	37
Hispanic	34
Income <$20K	34
Primary language not English	28

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Table 15
Rank of Importance of Information Related to Learning Something New or Updating a Skill
(Percent of group who looked for information or assistance)

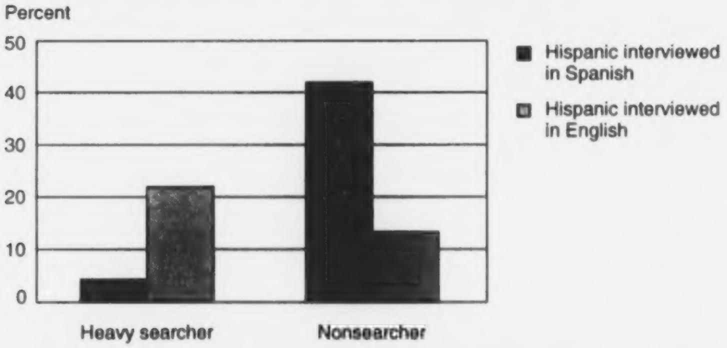
	Percent of Group	*Relative Rank Among Issues*
Total population	**32**	**5**
White	30	6
Hispanic	35	1
African American	37	2
Asian	36	4
Low income	28	2
Disability	27	8
Primary language at home is not English	32	1

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

those who looked for some kind of information or assistance in the past year stated that they did not find everything they needed. Those looking for medical and health information found the biggest gap between what they need and what they find. After medical and health information, the categories for which most people have trouble finding what they need are information to help a friend through a crisis, information about learning something new or updating a skill, and information about a legal matter. These are more complex and riskier issues compared to household purchases or vacation planning, and they are more open-ended and more difficult to resolve. In general, the needs for information about purchasing, vacation planning, and home repair are more easily met and do not pose large information gaps.

Different subgroups found information gaps in different categories, al-

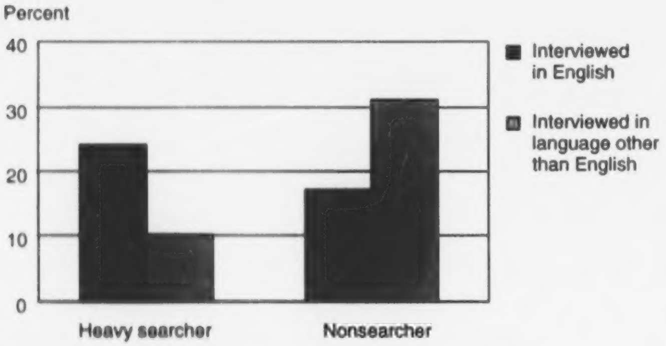
Figure 62
Hispanic Subgroups Have Very Different Information Needs



Note: Heavy searchers looked for information or assistance in six or more of the "areas of need" identified in the state survey. Nonsearchers did not look for any. The 11 information areas are household budget or personal finances; parenting concerns; medical or health education issues; helping someone through a crisis; a major household purchase; vacation or recreational planning; learning or updating a skill for your job or personal growth; housing or transportation; hobbies or personal interests; home repairs; and a legal situation.

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 63
Asian Subgroups Have Different Information Needs



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

though among Asians the difference is not significant (Table 16).

An interesting, though not unexpected, pattern emerges in the information gaps of different groups: the more individuals search for information, the more gaps they report. Those who search heavily for information are eight times more likely to find information gaps (Figure 64). If public libraries are to continue to meet the needs of such heavy information users, they must offer a sophisticated and wide range of resources and the means to access them quickly and easily.

Nonsearchers

Many Californians don't seek any information or assistance. Almost 16% of the Californians surveyed said they did not look for any information or assistance concerning any of the items listed in the survey. The subgroups most likely to be in this category are those who do not speak English at home and seniors (Figure 65).

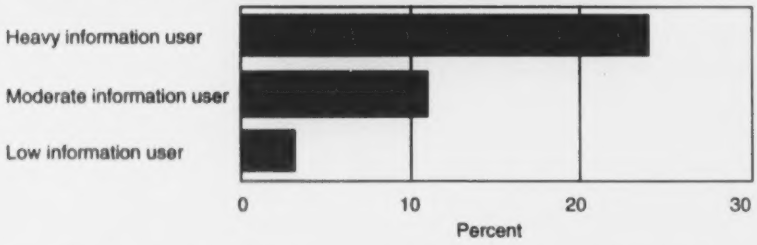
While Asian and Hispanic groups tended to avoid information searching more than others, African Americans' rate was the same as the state average. This implies that language is a more critical issue than ethnic group in determining whether an individual

Table 16
Information Gaps Vary by Subgroup

Population Group	*Biggest Information Gap*
Total	Medical and health information
African Americans	Legal information
Primary language spoken at home is not English	Learning something new or updating a skill
Asians	A major household purchase
Whites and Californians with a disability	Medical/health information
Hispanic low income	Learning something new or updating a skill
Hispanic interviewed in Spanish	Medical/health information
Asian low income	A major household purchase
Asian interviewed in native language	A major household purchase

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 64
Californians with Higher Information Needs Have More Gaps
(Percent of group that finds an information gap)



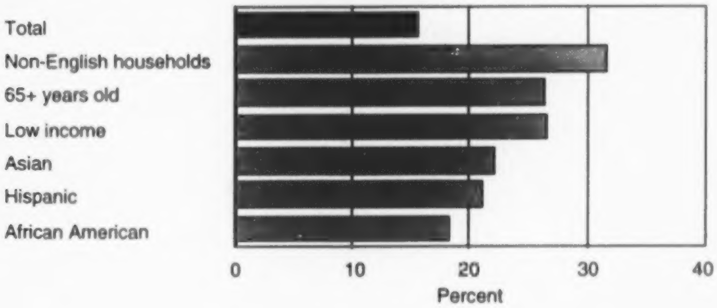
Note: An information gap is created when respondents state that they have sought information or assistance in a given area but did not get all the information or help they needed.

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

chooses to search for information or not. To reach out to the population of non-English speakers can only be fully successful when done in the native language of the individual. This may be hard, but the payoff is that these people will move closer to competing in a society that demands fluency in English and a certain level of acculturation for success.

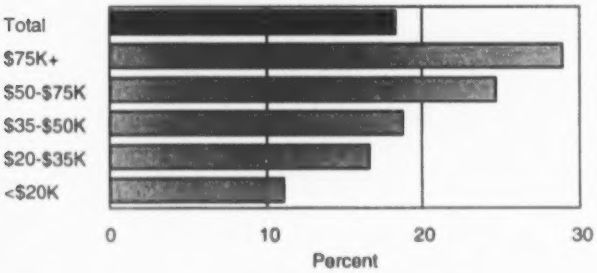
The tendency to search for information increases with income—almost 30% of Californians earning more than $75,000 looked for information on more than eight of the items listed on the survey, whereas only about 12% of those earning under $20,000 looked for that many items (Figure 66).

Figure 65
Non-Information Seekers in California
(Percent who did not search for any information)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 66
High-Income Earners Search for More Information Than Low-Income Earners
(Percent of heavy information searchers in each category)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

One-third of the low-income Hispanics and 42% of Hispanics interviewed in Spanish report that they did not search for any of the items listed in the survey (Table 17). Furthermore, one-third of Asians in the low-income and non-English interview groups report that they did not search for any items. These figures don't necessarily mean that these groups don't have information needs, but perhaps that they don't seek information in the same way that other Californians do as indicated by the survey.

However, Asians and Hispanics who use a computer at work are about half as likely to say they did not look for any information or assistance, and the variation was equally true for both groups (Table 18).

The data suggest that the kinds and channels of information offered by information providers and community institutions may not be relevant to these groups. Almost half (46%) of Californians interviewed in a language other than English stated that there is not enough information available in their native language. More than half of low-income Asians and Hispanics agree with this strongly.

OTHER DIFFERENCES IN INFORMATION GATHERING

Different groups gather and use information in different ways. Thirty-eight percent of Californians say they prefer talking to reading to get information and that they need better rather than more information in their daily life. Much higher percentages of low-income people strongly prefer talking to reading as a way of obtaining information (Figure 67).

These preferences for navigating sources of information may explain the information gaps and unmet needs of some Californians. For example, while only 15% of all adults in California agreed strongly that they usually have difficulty knowing where to get information, over 30% of low-income Hispanics and African Americans agreed (Figure 68).

Table 17
Less Aggressive Information Seekers
(Percent who did not look for any of the 11 items)

	Percent		*Percent*
Hispanics			
Low-income Hispanics	34	Higher income Hispanics	9
Hispanics interviewed in Spanish	42	Hispanics interviewed in English	13
Asians			
Low-income Asians	34	Higher income Asians	16
Asians interviewed in Asian Language	31	Asians Interviewed in English	17

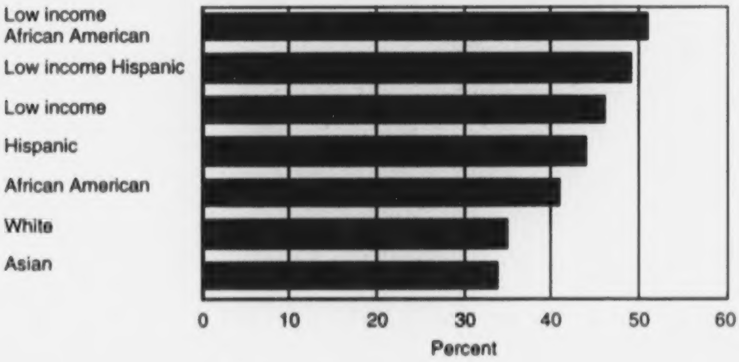
Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Table 18
Those Who Do Not Use PCs Are More Likely Not to Search for Information
(Percent who did not look for any information item)

	Percent		*Percent*
Asians not using a PC at work	26	Asians using a PC at work	13
Hispanics not using a PC at work	29	Hispanics using a PC at work	13

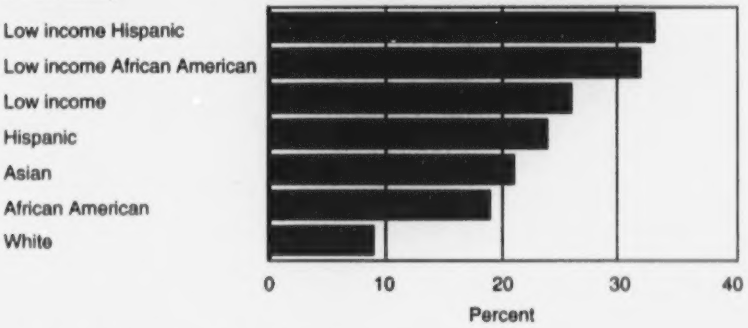
Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 67
Low-Income Prefer Talking Over Reading
(Percent who strongly prefer talking over reading to obtain infomation)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 68
Navigating for Information Is More of a Problem for Some Californians
(Percent who strongly agree that they have difficulty knowing where to find information)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Low-income and minority groups are also much less likely to utilize the range of alternative media to find information (Table 19).

Table 19
Low-Income and Minority Groups Use Fewer Resources
Question: In the past year, about how often have you . . .
(Percent who have . . .)

	Non-English At Home	*Less than $20,000 Income*	*Hispanic Low Income*	*Non-Hispanic White*
Requested written material, such as pamphlets, newsletters, or product information to be mailed to your house?	44	49	43	70
Used the phone to purchase something?	38	47	44	66
Gone to a central location (library, post office, city hall) to pick up community newsletters or other written material on community services, elections, product information?	49	45	49	54
Used a fax machine to request and retrieve news, directions, product brochures, or other information?	25	20	20	47
Used a self-service electronic kiosk in a public location (mall, library, airport, hotel) to get information, directions, or store/restaurant listings?	38	32	31	41
Used a computer to look up information about current events, weather, investments, or products/services?	22	21	21	37
Used the phone to pay bills?	25	17	26	13

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

In rethinking the public library's role in local communities in 2005, library directors and community officials must consider the following issues:

- *Learn how to meet the needs of subgroups.* Californians exhibit a wide variety of complex information-seeking behavior and search for information on a wide range of topics. As a result, public libraries must know how to meet the varying information needs of the different subgroups and understand what's behind them. To provide access or pointers to a broad range of content, public libraries ought to consider strategies such as partnering, using technology, or affiliating with other agencies.

- *Work to decrease information gaps of heavy users.* Californians who most actively seek information also have the largest information gaps (that is, the greatest numbers of searches for which they do not find the information they need). These people are heavy users of the public library and active in community affairs. Public libraries must make sure that this key group remains a strong supporter of the public library of the future.

- *Keep those less proficient in English in the loop.* Lack of English language proficiency seems to be the single most important determinant of who searches for information and who doesn't. To provide services to users who don't speak English at home, public libraries can offer materials in the languages of the represented groups. Just as important, the public library should develop processes or programs to help these groups learn the general value of information.

- *Maintain content, widen context.* Public libraries must continue to excel in their role as navigator, evaluator, and authority on information sources and content while at the same time creating a context in which all members of the community, even those with few information skills, know the value and range of information available and feel comfortable using it.

11. CALIFORNIANS UPGRADING SKILLS

CRITICAL ISSUES

Given the way the emerging business landscape is changing the work styles of many Californians, a sizable majority believe that they need to learn continually to keep up with their jobs and that computer skills are particularly important. These attitudes present a wide range of opportunities for public libraries to fulfill very basic economic needs in the community.

- Almost two-thirds of working Californians agree that they need to learn continually to keep up in the workplace—public libraries must position themselves as a key community resource for lifelong learning.
- Over 60% of Californians agree that they need computer skills to succeed—public libraries must provide basic access to computers and other information technologies, as well as training.

NEW SKILLS ARE THE KEYS TO SUCCESS

Perhaps in response to the recent California recession and the general climate of reengineering, Californians are highly concerned about keeping their jobs. One way to keep a job, of course, is to be invaluable to the company—to have the wide range of skills and flexibility companies require to compete in the fast-paced global marketplace.

Californians realize that if they want to keep their jobs, they can't become complacent. The survey shows that most Californians rank learning new skills very high: nearly 60% of all Californians, two-thirds of working Californians, and a majority of virtually every subgroup in the state "agree strongly" that learning new skills is essential for keeping up at work and that computer skills are a key element in career development (Table 20).

Learning New Skills

Although a majority of Californians agree strongly that to keep up on the job they have to learn new skills, it is instructive to identify what groups are in even stronger agreement than the state average.

Those who most strongly agree about the need to improve their skills include two distinct groups: those at the lower end of the job ladder (Hispanics and Asians who were interviewed in a language other than English, low-income Hispanics, and Hispanics with low levels of education), and those at the upper end (the college educated, those with the highest incomes, those who work at home, and infomated households).

Those who are less likely to strongly agree include those only marginally associated with the workforce (the very young and seniors), the "average" Californian (whites, those of average income, and those from the Central Valley and the Rural North), and low income African Americans. Even so, for almost all of these subgroups, a majority agree about the importance of continual learning (Table 21).

The Need for Computer Skills

A wide range of groups also agreed on the importance of computer skills, but the subgroups responded quite differently. In contrast to the question about learning new job skills in general, the

Table 20
Computer Skills and Learning Are Priorities for Most Californians
(Percent who agree strongly)

Agree Strongly	*Total*
To keep up at my job, I have to learn new things all the time	58
Among those in the labor force	64
In order to be successful these days, you need computer skills	61

Source: Field Survey, California State Library Survey, 1995 questions about the need for computer skills won dramatically high agreement from African Americans and only average support from those interviewed in a language other than English.

The strongest supporting groups were Asians and those with high income, education, and information needs. Those with the lowest levels of support were those with low income, those from the Rural North, and those over 65 years of age (Table 22). Keep in mind, however, that even in the subgroups that showed the lowest level of support, a majority of total respondents agreed strongly about the importance of computer skills.

Table 21
Wide Support for the Need to Increase Job Skills
(Percent that specific demographic subgroups are above or below the state average on the statement: I strongly agree that to keep up at my job, I have to learn new things all the time)

Above Average	
Asians who had non-English interview	+38
Hispanics who had non-English interview	+36
Asians who attended college	+28
Household income over $75,000	+21
Work at home	+19
Hispanics with incomes under $20,000	+14
Hispanics with high school diploma or less	+14
College graduates	+ 8

Below Average	
Households with incomes of $35,000 to $50,000	- 9
Whites	-10
18- to 24-year-olds	-12
Low-income African Americans	-12
Urban Central Valley	-16
Rural North	-16
Visit library less than once a year	-17
65+	-26

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Table 22
The Importance of Computer Skills Is Widely Acknowledged
(Percent that specific demographic subgroups are above or below the state average on the statement: I strongly agree that in order to be successful these days you need computer skills)

Above Average	
African Americans	+26
Infomated households	+16
Asians	+10
Heavy information needs	+10
Incomes over $75,000	+ 8
Frequent users of the library	+ 5
College graduates	+ 5

Below Average	
Incomes under $20,000	-5
Whites	-5
Hispanics with incomes under $20,000	-13
65 years of age or older	-13
Hispanics interviewed in Spanish	-18
Rural Northern Californians	-19

Note: An "infomated" household is one that has five of eight of the following technologies: VCR, cell phone, laser disc player, answering machine, computer, fax, voice mail, or CD player.

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

Diverse groups in California agree strongly about the importance of continual learning and computer skills. Public libraries can be instrumental in providing both to California communities.

- *Support lifelong learning.* Public libraries must become critical players in helping communities develop the capacity for lifelong learning, especially of computer skills.
- *Meet the needs of everyone.* To be effective as a center of lifelong learning, public libraries must meet the needs of a diverse community, from the rich and well-educated to those who struggle with the English language.
- *Provide technology access.* Public libraries are likely to gain wide support in their communities by providing access to computers and training.

12. Strong Support for Public Libraries

Critical
Issues

Californians show a high regard for libraries and public library services. Indeed, compared to other local institutions, the library is considered a trustworthy and high-quality source of information. Almost all significant sociodemographic subgroups say they use public libraries frequently, and a large portion of the community rate them as excellent resources. Public library support and use run across diverse groups, from infomated households with above-average technology access to Asian and Hispanic populations.

Public libraries can use their good reputation to build community and political support for the future.

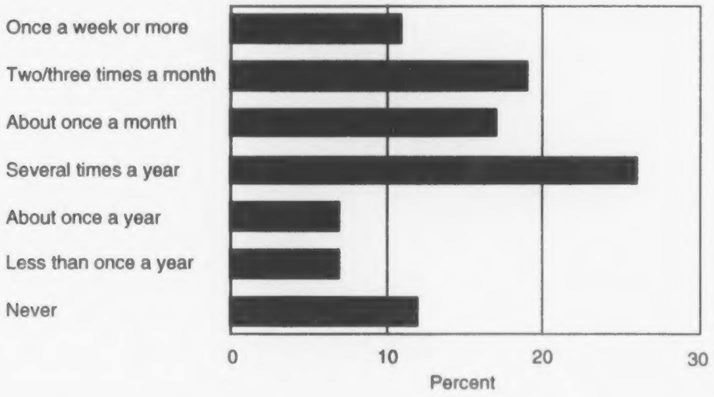
- Public use of the public library is high—public libraries must maintain and expand their services to continue to meet the needs of diverse communities.
- Despite widespread public support for expanding public library services, the public agenda rarely addresses these issues directly—public libraries must find allies to build this support into political clout.
- The public likes the public library most as a place of interactions—public libraries need to build new services that play to this strength.

Californians Use Public Libraries Regularly

Almost three-quarters of Californians use the public library at least several times a year. Almost half visit monthly or more (Figure 69).

The heaviest users of the public library tend to be the young, the well educated, the middle income, Asians,

Figure 69
Almost Half of Californians Use the Public Library Regularly (Percent)



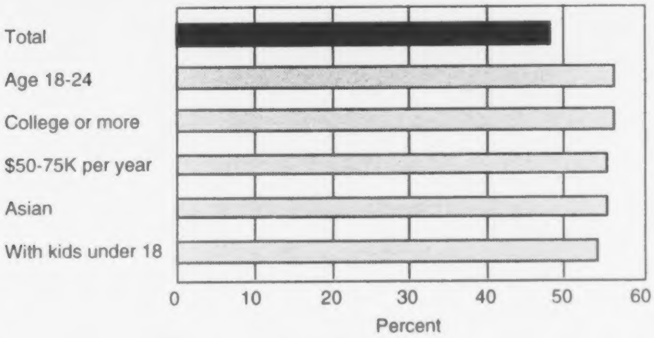
Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

and families with young kids at home (Figure 70).

Among ethnic groups, Asians and Hispanics are the heaviest users of the public library, while African Americans are more likely to be heavy users than whites (Figure 71).

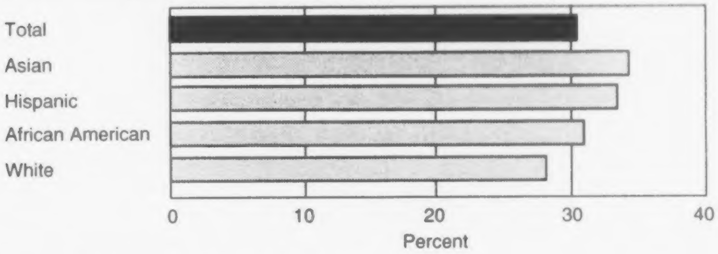
Language makes a significant difference in library use. Asians who prefer to be interviewed in a language other than English are 25% less likely to use the public library frequently; Hispanics interviewed in Spanish are almost 50% less likely to use the public library (Table 23).

Figure 70
Heavy Library Users Are Young, Educated, and Affluent
(Percent who use public library once a month or more)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 71
Asians and Hispanics Are the Heaviest Public Library Users
(Percent using the library once a month or more)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Table 23
Language Capability Is an Important Component of Public Library Use
(Percent of subgroup using the library once a month or more)

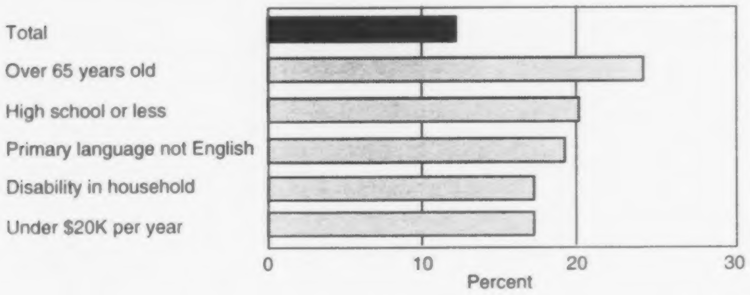
	Percent
Hispanics interviewed in English	56
Hispanics interviewed in Spanish	30
Asians interviewed in English	61
Asians interviewed in language other than English	45

Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Only about 12% of Californians say they never go to the public library. The groups that are most likely never to use the public library include the elderly (mobility is probably a big factor), the less educated (literacy may hold this group back), those who do not speak English at home, those with low incomes, and the disabled (Figure 72).

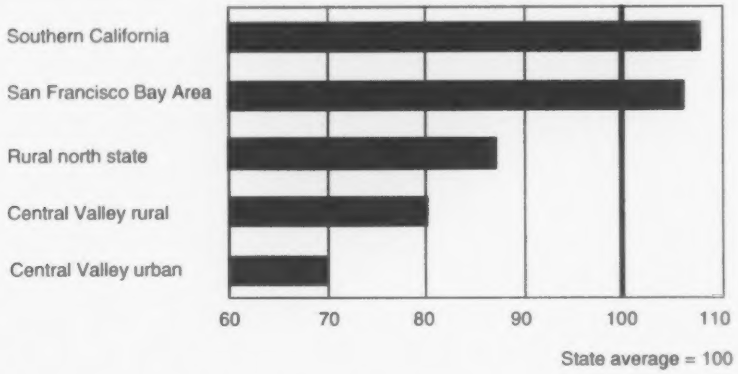
Public library use is higher in the urbanized coastal areas (Figure 73).

Figure 72
The Elderly and Those With Limited Education Are Most Likely Never to Use the Public Library
(Percent who never visit the library)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 73
Public Library Use Is Highest in the Large Coastal Communities
(Ratio to state average)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

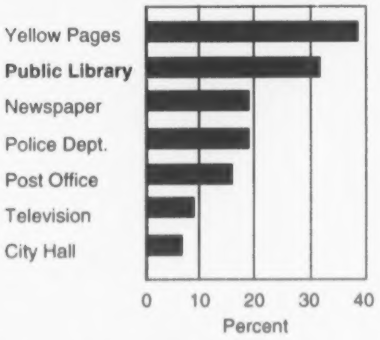
The Public Library Gets Very High Marks in the Community

Given their wide use of public libraries, Californians value the public library as a community resource. Compared to other community institutions or community sources of information, the public library is far more likely to receive an excellent rating (Figure 74).

This high rating is particularly apparent among the elderly, the low income, the unemployed, and those with a disability. Breaking the groups out by income is particularly instructive. The percent of those who rate the public library as an excellent source is highest among the lowest incomes but fairly consistent among all other groups (Figure 75).

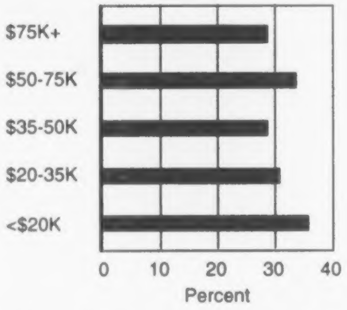
The strong perception of excellence runs across most ethnic groups. Asians are most likely not to rate the public library as excellent, with only 24% saying it provides excellent service compared to 32% or more for other groups. Despite some variances between rich and poor Asians, those who were interviewed in English and those not, and those with varying levels of income, virtually all Asian subgroups are more hesitant to rate the library as excellent than the average of the population as a whole (Figure 76).

Figure 74
Californians Think the Library Is a Good Value
(Percent who rate . . ."excellent" as a source of information or assistance)



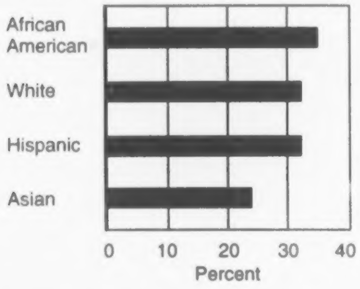
Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 75
Excellent Rating Is Fairly Consistent
(Percent who rate the public library excellent)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 76
Asians Are Less Inclined to Rate the Public Library Excellent
(Percent)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Table 24
There Is Potential Financial Support for the Public Library
(Percent willing to pay more)

Service	*Willing to Pay More*
Basic cable TV service—average cost is about $93	18
Daily newspaper service	2
Public library service—average cost is about $14 through local taxes	69

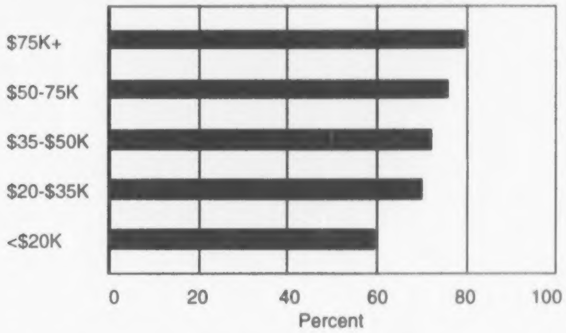
Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

CALIFORNIANS ARE WILLING TO PAY Californians are generally willing to pay more for expanded public library service. When asked whether they would be willing to pay more than the average cost for expanded service in several different areas, Californians responded most positively regarding the public library (Table 24).

While 69% of all Californians are willing to pay more for better public library services, the willingness to pay more for expanded services increases substantially with income. Eighty percent of those with incomes over $75,000 are willing to pay more for better service (Figure 77). It is interesting to note that fewer of the affluent rate the public library as excellent, but they are willing to support improvements with their own funds.

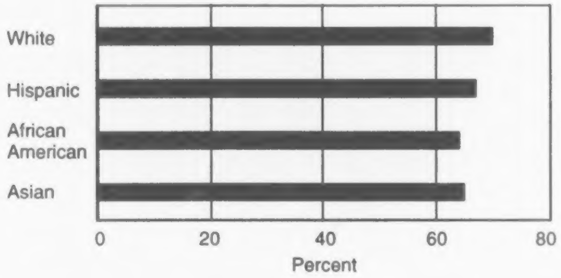
Ethnic groups (Asians, African Americans, and Hispanics) are about as likely as whites to say they are willing to pay for expanded public library service (Figure 78).

Figure 77
Affluent Are Willing to Pay More
(Percent willing to pay more)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

Figure 78
All Ethnic Groups Are Willing to Pay
(Percent willing to pay more)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

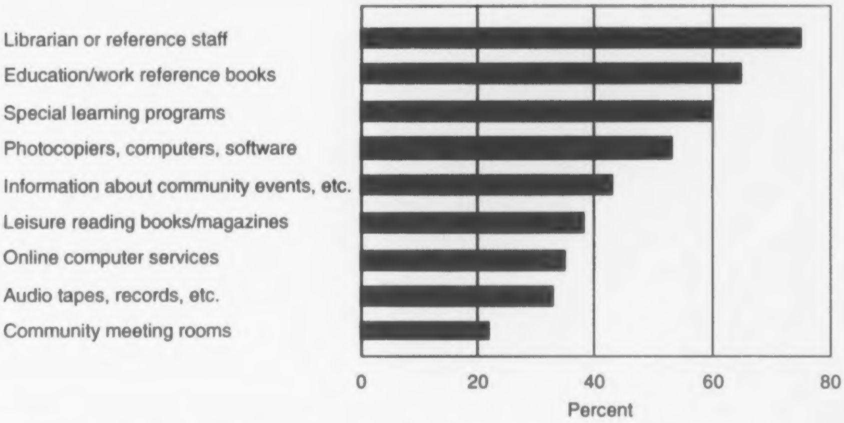
A DIVERSE CALIFORNIA VALUES INTERACTIVE AND DIRECTED SERVICE

What Californians seem to value most in the public library is personal, interactive service. To meet their personal needs, they rate a knowledgeable librarian as the most important library resource. Books and materials for education or work-related needs are next and then special learning programs (Figure 79). This suggests two important trends for librarians: one, that they won't be replaced by computers any time soon, and, two, that their role as information impresarios, educators, and communicators will continue to evolve.

Different groups of Californians view the public library in different ways. Some view the public library as an extension of their household infrastructure, while others see it as a central community hub of information, almost a social center.

- African Americans, Hispanics, and low-income groups are much more likely than others to rate community information (local news and events and transportation) and access to equipment very important.
- Young people, Hispanics, and African Americans are the most likely to rate access to online resources as very important.
- Baby boomers (aged 25 to 44 years) rate community information, access to online services, and educational books and materials very important.
- Seniors are least likely to identify the librarian as very important.

Figure 79
Librarians Are Considered a Key Public Library Resource
(Percent who identify as important for themselves personally)



Source: Field Research, California State Library Survey, 1995

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

Public libraries have a reputation as high-quality organizations in the community.

In the next decade, public libraries should work to keep and expand this reputation

and use it to ensure political and financial support.

- *Track changing needs.* A broad range of subgroups in California's population use public libraries relatively often. As the different groups' needs diverge, each public library must recognize the needs of existing populations and how those needs are changing in developing its own programs.

- *Develop political clout.* Support for the public library is strong, even among those groups who are not the heaviest current users. Public libraries must mobilize this latent support within the community to develop political clout for activities that open new services for the larger community.

- *Break down barriers to access.* The elderly, those with low incomes, and those with limited English proficiency are the groups least likely to use the public library. A better understanding of the local barriers that keep these groups away is essential. Barriers such as poor mobility for the elderly, the limited literacy of the poorly educated, and language proficiency for recent immigrants are complex social issues rather than simple technical limitations. To improve the relevance of the public library to these groups, public libraries must increase efforts in outreach and special services by acquiring a closer understanding of the context of information and services within these communities.

- *The librarian is still important.* At the top of the public library users' wish list are services or programs that are interactive or directed to specific needs. Public libraries must build more of their resources around learning about and responding to specific needs.

PART II

A VISION FOR CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

This section describes a visit to the local public library in the year 2005. It is intended to stretch the notion of what public libraries can be by encapsulating their needs, the communities they serve, and their services and programs in a single library. As such, the vision builds on the current reality depicted in "Part I: Critical Issues for California's Public Libraries" to give public libraries a target to aim for. "Part III: Strategic Choices for California's Public Libraries" suggests ways of bridging the present and the future.

A VISIT TO THE PUBLIC LIBRARY IN 2005

VISION

"It's not the dentist, John Romero," Christina Gomez said. "It's a library. It's fun."

"It's fun when it's fun," Andy Kim said. "This is homework."

"Let's get it over with," John said.

The doors opened automatically. Once inside, they saw a row of automatic checkout machines on their left. At the end was a bigger machine with a sign on it: KIOSK PLUS. Then in smaller letters: Visit Our Other Locations. Over their right shoulders was the checkout and renewal desk, staffed by library assistants on high-backed stools, their scanners propped in front of them like six-shooters. Posted on the walls were signposts like those in hospitals or on the street, with arrows going every which way: COMMONS, STACKS, COPYPLUS, COMMUNITY COLLEGE CENTER, CHILDREN'S CASTLE, LITERACY/LANGUAGE LAB, SANTA ANA ROOM, TEENSPACE.

"That's the one we want," Christina said. "TeenSpace."

"You know, we have been to the library before," John shot back at her.

"Coulda fooled me."

They had come to the library to get started on their group project for Mr. Gutierrez's seventh grade American History class, which he had told them about that day in third period.

"The purpose of the project is twofold," Mr. Gutierrez had said to the groans of his class. "One," the teacher said, holding up his thumb, "to learn something about American history. Of course. Two," he held up his index finger, "to learn how to work on a team."

"Like a soccer team?" Andy called out from the Red Table. He was not only John's best friend, but part of John's report team, along with Christina. Unlike a lot of teachers, Mr. Gutierrez didn't mind friends working together.

"Just like that, only different." Mr. Gutierrez thought he was funny, and John had to admit that sometimes he was. "Your goal isn't to score a goal, but to 'produce' a report. Notice I didn't say 'write' a report. Your report can be in any medium you choose: paper, video, multimedia. The more creative the better. Once they're done, we'll give them to Archy, and he'll publish them on our home page." Archy was the class's personal electronic agent.

"Maybe Archy can do the report," John spoke up.

"You know, I'll bet he could, if we programmed him to, but then it would be Archy's project, not yours. I wouldn't want to deprive my favorite seventh graders of that sense of accomplishment for a job well done."

"I don't know anything about this multimedia," John complained.

"Did you ever go to TeenSpace at the library?" Christina butted in. Mr. Gutierrez didn't mind the interruption. He liked his students to solve problems on their own.

"Yeah, sometimes. To movie night, anyway." Two Fridays a month the library had Junior High Night, offering movies for younger teens, with optional discussion groups afterward.

"Talk to the 'Puter Tutor, Ms. Kelly," Christina continued. She's there every day after school and in the morning on Saturday. She'll set up a tutorial for you. But it gets crowded pretty fast. Hey, actually you can use the Web to sign up right now. I can do it for you."

"No, Christina," Mr. Gutierrez interrupted. "Let John do it. Through the

Posted on the walls were signposts like those in hospitals or on the street, with arrows going every which way: COMMONS, STACKS, COPYPLUS, COMMUNITY COLLEGE CENTER, CHILDREN'S CASTLE, LITERACY/LANGUAGE LAB, SANTA ANA ROOM, TEENSPACE.

The physical layout of the library peeled away like rose petals from wherever you stood.

fingers to the brain." He tapped his index finger on the side of his head.

John opened his laptop, clicked into the community directory, then into the library, then into the 'Puter Tutor. "Hey, you're right," he said. "You can schedule it right here."

When he went to close his laptop, Mr. Gutierrez said. "Well, did you?"

"I was going to later."

"We could go after school today," Christina said. "There's an opening right there." She pointed to the screen.

John glared at her. He liked to play basketball after school with his brother. Then he sighed, and signed them up for a tutorial at 4:00 that afternoon. He couldn't fight Mr. Gutierrez and Christina both.

"In fact, I've already spoken with Ms. Kelly, and she'll be expecting you all to show up sometime in the next two weeks," Mr. Gutierrez said. "Okay, it might be a good idea if the other teams made their appointments, too."

"Hey, Mr. Gutierrez?"

"Hey, Andy."

"You know those machines at the Mall? The ones with the library's name on them? Can't you do stuff like this from there, too?"

"Yes you can, while you're eating your corn dogs and soda. Now you have no excuse for not doing your homework. Where else can you hook up to the library?"

"From home on the computer," somebody called out.

"Interactive TV," came another voice.

"The grocery store," said a third.

"Check, check, and check," Mr. Gutierrez said. "And some of the bigger business offices downtown have mini-branches right in their buildings. Okay. Let's get to work. Everyone use DIALIN right now to search the library catalogue. I want at least eight sources for your topics—two books, three articles, three firsthand accounts."

The class groaned.

"You know, back in *my* day we actually had to walk to the library to do this. And all this information was on little cards that we had to go through by hand."

"Yeah, and you had to walk to school barefoot in four feet of snow." This was Andy.

"Barefoot maybe, but not in snow. I'm from Santa Barbara."

With that, the students pulled opened their laptops, some eagerly, some reluctantly, and got down to work.

To the right and left were semicircular desks, one larger than the other. The large one, the first one you noticed, was REFERENCE SERVICES, beyond which appeared to be shelves and shelves of books in a regular pattern— from previous visits, John knew they were encyclopedias and other reference material. John knew more about the library than he liked to let on. For instance, he knew that somewhere back there—it was hard to describe, because the physical layout of the library peeled away like rose petals from wherever you stood—was a room filled with terminals dedicated to specific databases, like MedLine, Lexis/Nexis, Dow Jones News Retrieval, and Dialog.

"Maybe we can get them to do our report," John said, pointing to a sign propped on the Research desk: TRY OUR RESEARCH CONSULTING SERVICE. REASONABLE RATES. "I've got five bucks."

"Grow up," Christina said.

Over the desk to the right was another sign that read INFORMATION. In front of the information desk, placed so you couldn't help but see it, was a portable electronic sign—really a flat-panel TV on wheels—that read TODAY'S COMMUNITY EVENTS. Listed below with their times were: POETRY WORKSHOP FOR SE-

NIORS, CUB SCOUT TROOP 522, ROTARY CLUB, and ELECTRONIC JOB-SEEKING: A PRESENTATION OF THE LIBRARY/BUSINESS COALITION.

"My uncle should go to that one," John said. "He hates that job at the warehouse, but he thinks he's stuck."

"Tell him about the meeting," Christina said. "If he can't make that one, they have them all the time. That group has a resource table over by the business computers."

The curves of the research and information desks led John's eye directly to the center of the main building, with its high, gently sloping ceilings.

"That's the Commons," Christina said.

"I know that," John said.

"But do you know why?"

He shook his head.

"Like when Mr. Gutierrez told us about colonial times, before they had TVs and radio, people used to go out to the Commons to hear the news. They brought their cows to graze and talked about everything from the weather to sports."

"I don't see any cows," Andy said.

"Don't be an idiot, Andy Kim."

Christina was right. It did look like a town square. People were talking with each other, sitting on couches with tables in front of them. There were younger men and women, some with kids in strollers or baby carriers, as well as older white-haired men and women, and even some teens in jagged haircuts and baggy T-shirts who hadn't made it to TeenSpace. Many worked on laptops or played chess, backgammon, or cribbage. Some looked like they were arguing over newspaper or magazine articles. A few played electronic handheld games with others or by themselves, and some had the telltale silver pin attached to their earlobes that allowed them to listen to mini-CD players.

A group of people were rearranging the furniture to let their neighbors into the conversation. Others were using the terminals lining both sides of the Commons, some for accessing the Net, e-mail, and community networks, others for the library catalogue. Signs above the terminals read: "Please Do Not Be Silent."

Beyond the terminals were glass-enclosed booths—little rooms really—where people in business clothes sat in front of open briefcases or notebook computers, either alone or with someone else dressed the same way. Some were talking on cell phones. John made out the sign: *DIGINET* TELECOMMUTER CENTER.

On both sides of the Commons were shelves of books, arranged in quadrants divided by reading tables with green-shaded banker's lamps and newfangled network connections.

At the far side of the Commons was an espresso bar with coffee, soda, fruit drinks, and snacks available. It was cordoned off from the rest of the Commons with those velvet ropes you see at movie theaters.

"TeenSpace is behind those books. Next to the Santa Ana Room."

"What's the Santa Ana Room?"

It's pretty neat," Christina said. "It's got books and computers and stuff, and they're all about our little town. 'A Birthday in the Life' is especially fun. You click your birthday and the year you were born—or any other for that matter—and you can find out what was happening on that day in Santa Ana. You can click on songs, and you'll hear the songs popular then. The same with movies and news and weather and stuff."

"My father would love that," John said. "He's always talking about how things used to be when he was a young, just here from Mexico. He could see it again for himself. Relive the old days."

"Bring him over," Andy said.

A group of people were rearranging the furniture to let their neighbors into their conversation. Others were using the terminals lining both sides of the Commons, some for accessing the Net, e-mail, and community networks, others for the library catalogue.

"He doesn't have to know one word of English," Christina said. "The library has programs in all kinds of languages. Computer tutorials like the one we're going to take, classes for jobs, classes for filling out tax forms or health care forms, classes just for learning about the library."

"You know my father. He's embarrassed that he's been here so long and doesn't know English better. He doesn't like to go places where he can't fall back on Spanish, you know?"

"He doesn't have to know one word of English," Christina said. "The library has programs in all kinds of languages. Computer tutorials like the one we're going to take, classes for jobs, classes for filling out tax forms or health care forms, classes just for learning about the library. He could talk all he wanted in Spanish, and people would understand him, too. Or if he wanted to, he could do a self-guided tour, carrying around a tape recorder with Spanish tapes. I know men don't like to think they need anybody's help."

"How do you know all about this?"

"I come here with my Aunt Anna all the time. My mother's younger sister, who came from Mexico two years ago. She's a hot ticket. She wants to improve her English, she says, and learn everything she can about the world. She comes here all the time to see what classes the community colleges have. She's always taking one class or another. Right now it's something about achieving financial independence. It even helped her get a job. She's the Hispanic-liaison for one of the colleges. Not much money in it, but she gets the classes for free and meets a lot of people."

"I should get my uncle to talk to her."

"She'd like that," Christina said. "She thinks your uncle's cute."

"She knows my uncle?"

"You'd be surprised. Sometimes we even bring my grandmother, you know, the one who's hard of hearing and can't see real well. She likes the 'books with big letters,' as she calls them. And the audio equipment for the hearing-impaired. We've convinced some of her friends to come along. They form a little group over by the coffee shop. Sometimes they never get to the books or music; they just sit there and talk the afternoon away. Like the cafés of Paree. Oh, let's go," she said, noticing the holograph clock on the wall. "If you're more than five minutes late, Ms. Kelly gives the computer to someone else."

She pulled them into TeenSpace, which John had been in before, but just to listen to music. He had never paid much attention to what else the space had to offer. Starting on the outside walls, then following the arched opening into the space was a mural of kids their age doing all kinds of activities: skateboarding, looking through microscopes, swimming, volleyball, working at a computer, talking in groups. Many different ethnic groups were represented—Hispanics, like himself and Christina, Koreans like Andy, Chinese, Hmong, Japanese, African American.

"Hi, Christina," said an African American woman younger than John's father. She walked around the room with an air of friendly authority. "I see you've brought your friends with you."

"Hi, Ms. Kelly. This is Andy Kim and John Romero."

"*The* John Romero," Ms. Kelly said.

Christina smiled, and John looked away uncomfortably. Overstuffed furniture was set up in one corner of the space, and stacked against the wall were shelves of music discs and videos and several twirling racks of paperbacks. Set off to one side of the main space, not quite a separate room, were a number of workstations.

"Welcome to TeenSpace and the 'Puter Tutor. We hope you'll be joining Christina and coming back often. Mr. Gutierrez said that you will be working in multimedia on your history report. Christina can probably help you as much as I can, but it's good to go through the basic tutorial to show you how the equipment works and what's available. The video editor can be a little tricky without practice. So let me set you up. I reserved these workstations for you over here."

She led them to three free workstations, then said, "Click on the tutorial icon, and Athena will take you through the process. Athena's our personal agent. She's worked with Archy many times. If you have any questions, I'll be around."

John clicked on the tutorial icon, and soon was lost in a world of his own, the same state of mind he achieved sometimes playing basketball. He had started by clicking on Sports, then Basketball, then History, and was able to find clips of great players he had read about but never seen play, like Larry Bird and Magic Johnson. For his tutorial, he put together a collage of last second shots, switching off between the two players, and wrote a "voice-over," as Athena called it: "In their time, the two most dominating players in the game. Some call their matchups the greatest showdowns in Basketball History. You make the call."

"That's not what our report's about," Christina said, startling John. "We're doing a profile of an indentured servant."

"Athena said I could pick any topic I wanted."

"Athena's not writing our report. We've only got fifteen minutes left. Let's download some stuff, and we can work on it at school."

John sighed. Might as well get it over with, he decided. But in his search he found excerpts from a diary of an indentured servant written in secret to keep the fact that she could read and write hidden from her "mistress." She could only read one book at a time, and had to hide it in a slit in her mattress, along with her diary.

Now that made reading dangerous and exciting, John thought. The excerpt told the story of how she was kneeling in the room one time, reaching for the diary, when her mistress suddenly opened the door. She had to bend over to shield the paper from the intruder, who said, "What an odd way to pray. But I suppose each sect must have its own rites. Carry on."

Before he knew it, Christina was saying, "Okay, here comes Ms. Kelly. Time to go." John quickly downloaded some passages from the diary for their report, and video clips of a dramatic reading of some of those excerpts.

"Let's get something to drink," Andy said. They agreed.

On the way to the café, John ran his hand along the books on one of the shelves they passed. He detected the faint smell of dust and old paper, and thought about the diary writer on her hands and knees, protecting the diary from her mistress. Maybe there was more to these libraries than books, movies, and computers, he thought.

Maybe there was more to these libraries than books, movies, and computers.

PART III

STRATEGIC CHOICES FOR CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

STRATEGIC CHOICES

The third section of the report, "Strategic Choices for California's Public Libraries," is the bridge between the first two sections—"Critical Issues for California's Public Libraries" and "A Vision for California's Public Libraries." It describes strategies for moving public libraries from the present to the future.

For each strategic choice, we identify action steps and offer examples of how this strategy has worked for other public libraries or organizations. Not all of these strategies are appropriate for every public library. Each must choose the strategies that address its current challenges and community needs and pave the way for making its vision a reality.

The strategic choices come in no particular order, but they are grouped in three subcategories—"Partner With Community and Other Organizations," "Develop New Information and Technology Resources," and "Reorganize for the 21st Century." The strategies themselves are not numbered in reference to any other part of the report.

PARTNER WITH COMMUNITY AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

1. BUILD COMMUNITY SUPPORT

STRATEGIC CHOICES

Definition

California's public libraries must reach out to a wider community to build alliances and generate public support. But such an important task can't be left to the whims of the community. In years ahead, public libraries will have to manage this relationship professionally.

WHY COMMUNITY SUPPORT?

Reaching the community with the public library's story is harder than ever: California's communities are getting more diverse and more complex—with greater differences in language, educational background, and patterns of information use.

At the same time, the need to generate new funding is critical: public library revenues were adversely affected by the long California recession of the early 1990s. Still, our California survey clearly shows that there is a huge fund of good will and proactive support for public libraries in virtually every California community. Only by maintaining and building on that support will the public library achieve its goals in the next decade.

Most people who infrequently or never use the public library often have antiquated notions of what the public library is, while even heavy users (even sophisticated technology users) are not aware of all the ways a public library can serve them. The public library must update its image to communicate with groups that may use the library in quite different ways.

ACTION STEPS

Two areas are of particular concern for public libraries building support in the community: networking with key players in the community and managing community relations in a professional manner. Both require careful assessment and communication of the library's unique value to the community.

Become the Community Information Hub

With its existing information resources, the public library is the natural choice to be the hub of the community's electronic information net. This would transform the image of the public library from that of a passive repository of documents to an active disseminator of community information.

For example, the Pasadena Public Library is the Internet node for all public agencies in the city. It is responsible for developing, designing, and administering home pages for the city's agencies and departments. The public library is the center of the node, managing content, helping with individual page design, and providing advice and options for other agencies.

This new role for the Pasadena Public Library evolved over five years. One drawback is that it does take time from significant personnel. So far it has been worth the effort, however, because it has given the library a key role in the community and enhanced its importance in the eyes of the public and the city council. It certainly contributed to the overwhelming 87% vote of approval in the 1993 election, which gave the library independent funding for five years by means of a parcel tax. It is also likely to play a role in the upcoming vote to renew that support.

Work with a Community Networker

Community outreach is important for a successful public library. Elsewhere we have identified manifestations of successful outreach—better evaluation of community needs, valuable collaborations with other public and private organizations, and increased funding. To achieve this goal, community networking is and will remain an important part of the public library director's job. To be successful, the director must be supported by a professional whose primary duty is community networking.

The networker's job is to gather ideas on community information needs from outside the public library and build informal networks that can be used to leverage public library assets to have a wider impact on the total community, thus fulfilling the public library's strategic plan. A successful community networker will have the following attributes:

- *A network of contacts.* The community networker is responsible for build-

Most people who infrequently or never use the public library often have antiquated notions of what the public library is, while even heavy users (even sophisticated technology users) are not aware of all the ways a public library can serve them.

ing ongoing contacts with other stakeholders in the community. The networker should know the key players in the community, attend the important meetings of other public agencies (the school board, the city council, the chamber of commerce, the community club), and meet informally with anyone responsible for community information needs.

- *Collaborative vision.* The community networker is responsible for identifying possibilities and laying the groundwork for collaboration with other community stakeholders. Through continual contacts with others in the community, the networker must discover shared goals and explore different ways that public libraries, schools, city agencies, and the business community can collaborate to mutual advantage.

- *Communication skills.* Since the community networker represents the public library in the community, the networker should share the vision of the library and be an articulate spokesperson in both formal and informal settings, including those that require facility in languages other than English.

- *Trustworthiness.* Community networkers will be effective only if they have the complete confidence of the public library director and the community.

Find Collaborators to Build Public Image

Californians who use the public library infrequently or not at all often have outdated perceptions of the library. Efforts to increase awareness of the variety and depth of public library services is important for increasing the number of patrons, building support among community members, and maintaining awareness of public library services and benefits among potential funders. The national organization, Libraries for the Future (LFF), is one organization that can help public libraries and their patrons communicate the relevance and importance of public library services to the community.

LFF was founded to inspire users and advocates, enlighten local and national leaders, and serve as a clearinghouse for user-related information. The organization is based on the belief that libraries are evolving into centers of communication, education, computer networking, economic development, community organizing, and cultural expression.

LFF operates in several different ways, from running a National Library Advocates Network and successful library organizing campaigns to pro-

---

For more information about the organizations and services in this section, contact:

Libraries for the Future
521 Fifth Ave., Suite 1612
New York, NY 10175-1699
Phone: 800-542-1918 or 212-682-7446
Fax: 212-682-7657
E-mail: lff@inch.com
URL: http://www.inch.com/~lff/lffhome.htm

moting various demonstration projects and technology programs. To better disperse its knowledge of best practices, LFF offers PUB-ADV, a listserv for library advocates; has links to relevant federal legislation and policy information from its Web home page; publishes documents such as *Library Advocate* and *Library Advocate's Power Tools*; and conducts workshops and conferences.

Market Services in New Ways

San Jose's Environmental Services Department developed an effective public communication program for increasing the level of recycling in a diverse community. Special efforts were necessary to reach a rapidly growing Vietnamese population and a long-standing Latino community. Surveys and focus groups generated the information to design a multimedia campaign to reach the diverse target audiences. Tactics included direct mail, trilingual outreach, media relations, targeted advertising, a speakers bureau, special events, and a block leader program that had volunteers going door-to-door to discuss recycling.

Of the two contractors hired to implement the recycling project, one firm conducted a school education program, and the other used a special outreach campaign to multifamily units. An opinion survey conducted four months after the launch of the program showed overwhelming acceptance. After six months of operation, the volume of residential recycling almost tripled.

Involve the Community in Service Planning

The Ohio Library Council achieved broad community involvement in its effort to fight off a proposal to reduce the library's share of the budget from 6.3% to 5.7%. In its efforts, the council relied heavily on a series of focus groups with local officials and the community, and it prepared a "6.3% Grassroots Action Kit" for community members to use in their own local lobbying activities.

An 18-month public affairs campaign began with a series of six regional workshops for the library community. By working to educate communities by region, the library managed to consolidate support at the regional level. The local activities conducted through the library systems pulled together into a successful statewide effort. Legislators and statehouse reporters were included to help explain how statehouse business was conducted and to underscore the message that being proactive is vital for an effective lobbying effort.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Communication and networking strategies build enduring relationships with community groups and create important sources of support and feedback. The goal is to create an ongoing, honest, and informed dialogue between the public library and its community.

Community networking is time-intensive, and its rewards are not always immediately evident. To be effective, support for this effort must be clearly related to strategic goals and be a primary concern of the public library director.

2. ENTER FRUITFUL COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

STRATEGIC CHOICES

Definition

Creative partnerships, alliances, and collaborative agreements with other community organizations—private and public—are valuable tools for leveraging expertise across organizations, sharing the burden of new endeavors, reaching new customers, and developing new types of services that meet the needs of a much wider segment of the community. Public libraries can learn lessons from the private sector, where many of California's leading industries, such as the computer, software, biotech, and entertainment industries, have used partnerships to develop and deliver new products and services.

WHY COLLABORATE?

A number of environmental factors underscore the value of collaboration: the tight finances of most communities in California, rapid and costly technological innovations, the need to reach out to a community that is more diverse than ever, and the growing number of young people accessing information in new and innovative ways. Public libraries can use a wide range of collaborative ventures to leverage their own limited resources to reach their natural customers in new ways.

ACTION STEPS

Local public libraries must change the way they look at their communities. They ought to identify potential partners in their community who share common goals, develop complementary activities that jointly meet those goals, and build an effective framework for interacting over the course of a program or project. There are at least four components to any collaboration: identifying the right partners, mapping assets, building links in the local community, and creating an electronic network.

Identify Partners for Collaboration

A variety of entities could be fruitful partners for local public libraries—schools, local governments, social service agencies, telecommunications and cable companies, the local business community, or training bureaus. Several tips for identifying such key allies are outlined below.

- Find out what other community organizations provide public library–like services and partner with them on specific initiatives.
- Seek out natural allies in the community. Parents of school-age children are supporters with a strong voice in public libraries and schools.
- Recruit a broad base of coalition members and endorsers. Draw on those who use public library services and those who gather and use information from other sources but would appreciate a wider selection.
- Leverage services to children. Many innovative ideas are evolving quickly from the use of electronic media in elementary schools and after-school projects. By casting itself as a tool for education, the public library may draw advocacy and find links to other organizations working on related concerns.
- Invest in someone who can take on the role of community coordinator—a person with skills in community networking. This person can do more than anyone to build bridges with the community.

Map Assets

Obtaining knowledge about the skills available in the community is the first step to building collaborative relationships. Asset mapping is one such technique, as shown in the following case study.

The Community Development Caritas (CDC), in Edmonton, Canada, opened in 1994 to support neighborhoods and local groups by facilitating the development of community-centered initiatives and supporting community-driven action. CDC practices the philosophy of "Building on Capacities"—the idea that each citizen, community, organization, and business has gifts to share and communicate with others. Based on this concept, CDC has become a resource sup-

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

porting the development and sharing of local partnerships and linkages by means of processes like asset mapping.

The mapping process is designed to discover the assets of a community and its citizens, show the supports and their connections, and foster community action. The result is an asset map, a visual representation accentuating positive and unique resources and assets in and around a community. The map illustrates how the resources are related to each other by existing or potential connections and, therefore, how they could come together for the economic and social development of the community. CDC reached these aims by means of an interactive workshop with youth groups, schools, and agencies that guided the participants in developing their "Building on Capacities" thinking. Public libraries could facilitate similar processes.

Build Links with Local Institutions

Public libraries can find a number of ways to work with local community organizations to reach those who are traditionally hard to reach.

A good example is Brooklyn's Community Library Information Collaborative Project (CLIC), which was born of the need for community revitalization in the face of financial constraints on libraries. Designed by Libraries for the Future, CLIC trains Community Library Facilitators to forge links between local institutions, organizations, associations, and branch libraries. These facilitators work with local librarians to foster the connection between local groups and the library, as well as to develop programs and services that respond to changing community needs. CLIC also assigns a full-time community organizer to coordinate outreach activities.

CLIC works through outreach and neighborhood involvement to raise awareness of public library resources and to increase advocacy for its role in the community. In collaboration with the Brooklyn Public Library and the Brooklyn chapter of the neighborhood organizing group, the Flatbush Branch Library was chosen as the pilot site of the CLIC project. The Flatbush Branch covers the largest population of any Brooklyn branch (93,000) and serves a rich diversity of population groups and languages. Working with these challenges, CLIC has merged several local efforts into successful programs. For example:

- The CLIC facilitator, branch librarian, and local groups designed "Health Month at Flatbush." In October 1995, local social service groups conducted workshops about wellness and health, a high-ranking information need for many people.

For more information about the organizations and services in this section, contact:

The Community Development Caritas (CDC)
Susan Roberts, Angie Dedrick
Community Development Office
#681 8950 - 163 Street
Edmonton, Alberta - Canada
Phone: 403-484-9045
Fax: 403-484-9099
URL: http://www.caritas.ab.ca/~ccd/index.html

Brooklyn's Community Library Information Collaborative Project (CLIC)
Libraries for the Future
521 Fifth Ave., Suite 1612
New York, NY 10175-1699
Phone: 800-542-1918 or 212-682-7446
Fax: 212-682-7657
E-mail: lff@inch.com

Flint Community Networking Initiative (FCNI)
URL: http://www.flint.lib.mi.us/fpl/GFCNI/gfcni.html

- Working with the Caribbean Women's Health Association (CWHA), the Flatbush Branch organized a film series targeting teenagers. Films are provided by the CWHA and screened in the library's meeting rooms. The events are supervised by representatives of both partners.
- The first Friends of the Flatbush Library meeting was held to discuss the establishment of a tutoring and mentoring program staffed by local residents. Many members were interested in expanding the role of the Friends of the Library to develop other community service projects.

Create an Electronic Network

Electronic networks create unique opportunities for building community support.

The Flint Community Networking Initiative (FCNI) evolved from a single Internet training project for librarians into a $600,000 collaborative project with the University of Michigan School of Information and Library Studies (SILS) over the course of one year. The Flint Public Library has accelerated and supported FCNI's growth by emphasizing training, community skill-building, and the successful integration of digital resources.

FCNI now has a computer and Internet training facility, including a high-speed connection to the World Wide Web, multimedia tools, and 18 networked Power Macintoshes. The facility is used by the Flint Public Library to introduce community leaders to civic networking and the potential of the Web and to provide greater information access to the public.

Several driving goals support the growth of FCNI: to create an information infrastructure for fostering a strong community network, to combine the public library concepts of free public access to a wide variety of organized resources, and to transform the provision of information by public libraries through a living laboratory of practice. Enabling these ideas is a group of trained librarians acting as cyberspace navigators and working to train others in digital information retrieval and publishing as a means to build a real, sustainable community.

In this manner, FCNI has put the library at the center of community electronic networking initiatives, giving the library high visibility as a key player in the information revolution. While the Flint effort has grown into a larger project with a big budget, similar community networking initiatives can be done for much less.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Collaborative agreements and partnerships increase the public library's ability to extend and develop new services by leveraging expertise and assets in the broader community. The library is positioned well to engage in such partnerships because it has the potential to add value to almost any group in the community that deals with information.

Major stakeholders such as private businesses, K–12 schools, local government, local health and social service agencies, news media, and community event sponsors all benefit from the increased capacity of the library to provide information resources, tools, and services to the community. The library ought to position itself as the partner of choice for any local entity.

The downside is that while joint ventures and partnerships offer increased breadth of service, flexibility, and responsiveness in meeting community needs, they are costly and time consuming to manage.

Coordinating and tracking partners and managing and maintaining the relationships between different groups take resources, particular skills, and a full-time commitment. Libraries may get caught spreading their resources too thin or lacking the proper experience and skill to effectively use partnerships. Creative use of the library board, Friends of the Library, and other related groups can get partnerships underway while teaching the libraries how to develop and manage them.

3. FACILITATE CONTINUING EDUCATION

STRATEGIC
CHOICES

Definition

Many libraries in California share a vision that positions the public library as a facilitator and guardian of lifelong learning in the community. This vision includes all types of learning for a broad range of Californians—literacy development for the young or recent immigrants, skills that might broaden employment horizons, enrichment that enhances the quality of life, Internet training for those who may not have access and training at work or home, language training for both English and non-English speakers, and business and marketing skills for small businesses and local public agencies (including the library staff). The public library can also be a community center for resources related to critical issues such as health and medical information, family planning and decision making, and world news and events.

WHY CONTINUING EDUCATION?

Opportunities for ongoing learning are important for many Californians. As shown in the statewide survey of Californians, over two-thirds agreed (and 38% strongly agreed) that they have to continue learning to keep up at work. About the same number agreed that knowing how to use computers is important for success. Whether updating a skill for personal growth or for keeping up on the job, or learning about the Internet for personal or professional reasons, access to educational and learning opportunities will continue to be important for all Californians.

ACTION STEPS

Public libraries are not the only educational providers in the community and must take advantage of partnerships with other local organizations to provide lifelong learning opportunities, particularly with local community colleges, K–12 schools, and other instructional providers. This will prevent any perception of encroachment into other organizations' markets and lead to a more effective use of resources. Some ways the public library can partner with others to provide learning opportunities are described below.

Coordinate with Local and County Educational Institutions

A large number of agencies, organizations, and firms provide educational services in a community. Public libraries can partner with these entities to offer educational programs or supplement existing programs. For example, public libraries could be satellites for local community colleges or adult schools that are reaching out to a wider local audience; some courses could be taught in tandem. Further, public library literacy programs may be coordinated with adult school programs on language and citizenship. Public library programs on accessing local information sources could be an integral part of the adult school or community college curriculum.

The Indiana Free Library, for example, extended its existing literacy programs by recruiting and training tutors to use computers with literacy students and to offer topics such as alcohol and drug abuse awareness, English as a second language, and spelling at the same time.

Collaborate with Community Businesses to Provide Topical Seminars

Continuing education can also include seminars, workshops, or courses tailored to the particular interest of part of the community:

- The business community might sponsor workshops or classes on research skills for the marketplace, information technology skills, or job application procedures.

- The financial community might cosponsor seminars on tax planning, investments, and retirement.
- The local chamber of commerce might sponsor meetings on the long-term infrastructure needs of the community, including schools and parks.

Not only would these kinds of community workshops offer continuing education, they would also enhance the image of the public library as the up-to-date hub of community information.

Develop Customer Awareness

California businesses are working to become more responsive to their customers. The public library can learn a lot from organizations that have developed new and innovative responses. Helping the library staff stay up to date with business communications, research, marketing, and management skills is an important step in developing new library services and responding to community needs.

- *Learn from professionals.* Public libraries can collaborate with key private-sector organizations to learn customer information-gathering techniques and successful business solutions. Business leaders could be invited to present workshops on relevant subjects, such as reaching new customers, keeping current customers, and learning from market case studies. Key participants might include small businesses that have learned entrepreneurial skills and how to compete in the marketplace, businesses that have had to respond to radical changes in the market (for example, declines in their industries or major cuts in federal funding), or businesses that are trying a wide range of new approaches to the marketplace. Professional associations, like the local chapter of the American Marketing Association, may also be an important collaborator.
- *Collaborate with academics.* The business and marketing faculties of colleges and universities could be excellent collaborators for co-developing these customer-oriented programs. For example, a prominent marketing professor can discuss services marketing—how library personnel can be trained to see service through the eyes of the user—or the latest research on measuring the effectiveness of a service to customers. Faculty often are looking for important projects to help their students identify and learn key principles of business. The faculty may be interested in collaborating with the local public library to offer internships, special projects, or a team of student marketing consultants to help solve particular problems.

Partner to Offer "Information Literacy" Programs

As the use of computers grows at home, at work, and at school, new forms of literacy are emerging. In addition to basic reading, writing, and comprehension skills, other types of competencies are becoming necessary in the emerging information society.

Experts have labeled these new forms as "information literacy," "media literacy," "network literacy," and even "neo-graphic literacy." These new forms of literacy include the ability to identify, access, filter, process, and use information in text, graphic, and audio formats from electronic and nonelectronic sources to make decisions and carry out daily activities. Understanding the power of information in all its forms and contexts will be a critical skill for tomorrow's citizens. Public libraries have been successful in developing and providing traditional literacy classes aimed at young people and adults. The emergence of new

---

For more information about the organizations and services in this section, contact:

Dudee Chiang
Networked Information Resources Coordinator
Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Library
The University Library
University of Southern California,
mc 0182
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0182
Phone: 213-740-1207
Fax: 213-740-7713
E-mail: dchiang@calvin.usc.edu

Glide Memorial Church
330 Ellis Street
San Francisco, CA 94012
Phone: 415-771-6300

COMPUMENTOR
89 Stillman Street
San Francisco, CA 94107
Phone: 415-512-7784 or
800-659-3579
E-mail: cmentor@compumentor.org
URL: http://www.meer.net/users/taylor/compumen.htm

forms of literacy is increasing the need for a variety of players to collaborate to provide a range of services to address all forms of literacy.

- Libraries should consider working with middle and high school teachers to explore curriculum and instructional methods aimed at new types of literacy. Library input for K–12 educators will provide a necessary perspective on how curriculum can encompass new forms of literacy.
- The University of Southern California (USC) offers its students a "cybrary." The Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Library is designed for the digital age, offering multimedia computers for research, library consultants for online search strategies, and other help features. The key goal of this library is to offer users the skills and knowledge that will give them a competitive edge in the workplace and provide them with the tools to achieve lifelong learning.
- Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco has a program called Computers and You that introduces their homeless patrons to computers and offers basic training in computer and online skills. The program offers participants the opportunity to learn valuable skills that will increase their self-esteem. They are also learning functional skills so they can participate more fully in society and gain access to information—skills that ultimately may lead to work and independence.

Broker Training and Technology Support

Public libraries are natural environments for exposing people to computers and online information tools. While providing free access to computer equipment and online services is one way to help the community learn about these important tools, the public library may want to expand how and where it provides this kind of support.

For seven years, CompuMentor, a San Francisco nonprofit firm, has helped all sorts of nonprofit groups, schools, and public agencies learn to use computers to do their work and run their operations. Very simply, CompuMentor places computer experts and support people with nonprofit organizations that are stumped by computer problems ranging from setting up their computers to debugging software or developing customized databases. Often, small, community-based organizations don't have budgets that allow them to bring in a consultant. CompuMentor volunteers provide the missing link for solving problems. In the past seven years, they have worked with more than 1,500 computer experts to help more than 700 nonprofit groups, including social service, legal, environmental, health, arts, and community organizations.

Public libraries could support some version of this program, start one in their community, or provide the coordination for one with other nonprofit agencies in the community.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Building a stronger set of continuing education programs aimed at feeding the hunger for knowledge is a key step to meeting the public library's goal of encouraging lifelong learning for everyone. However, an effective community-based program can only be implemented in collaboration with other community players.

The public library needs to invest in a strong community network of K–12 schools, adult education programs, community colleges, and community groups interested and involved in training and education. Community networking and collaborative skills are critical to the success of programs like these.

4. FIND NEW FUNDING

STRATEGIC CHOICES

Definition

To expand their options and to better serve their communities, California public libraries must increase the amount of funding available or learn to better leverage the amount they have. New funds from public and private sources and from new types of library services can be tapped to solidify the position of the public library as a major player in the community.

WHY NEW FUNDING?

Limited funding is perhaps one of the biggest constraints for local public libraries. In many areas, local funding declined in real terms during the California recession of the early and mid-1990s. In city budgets, public library issues are often overshadowed by other critical community issues such as crime, congestion, housing, schools, and jobs.

The public libraries' dependence on local municipal funds tends to create reactionary planning—where there is pressure to maintain the status quo of programs and services—rather than innovative prospective planning to create new solutions for meeting diverse community needs. Public libraries must articulate their role as part of the solution to those issues in order to attract attention and more funding from local city sources.

ACTION STEPS

A public library can increase its effective resources in four ways: articulate the importance of the library to existing funders by communicating and demonstrating the public library's unique value as the provider of information, leverage current assets with other local agencies or private businesses, raise funds independently, and charge fees for nonbasic services.

Articulate the Critical Importance of the Library

Advocacy for the public library is a critical part of any plan to develop alternative and additional sources of funding. Unfortunately, library staff often have little time or skill to do it. Public libraries that are serious about increasing their share of local funds or even maintaining their budgets during recessions must develop the advocacy skills of the library director, library staff, Friends of the Library, library board, and other members of the public library community who can articulate the message and vision of the library to the broader funding community.

The first step is to make sure library staff understand and believe in their vision. In addition, library staff must learn and teach others skills in communication, presentation, group facilitation, written and graphic communication, and marketing. These skills are necessary for getting the word out about public libraries and presenting the community with the arguments for supporting them.

- *Friends of the Library: Oakland, California.* Terry Preston, president of the Friends of the Oakland Library, shared eight factors critical to getting support for new taxes to fund the Oakland Library: obtain the full support of the governing board; get early financial support for the campaign; provide mailing lists of supporters and volunteers; follow up with library-card holders; look for in-kind donations; get support from natural allies like booksellers; utilize the invaluable support of local newspapers, radio, and TV; and get the group's or organization's name in front of people to make it clear this is a citizens' support group.

- *The Chicago Campaign.* Following severe budget cuts, the Chicago Campaign was organized to communicate the key contributions the Chicago Public Library made to the community. For example, the library functions as a neighborhood center, an important source of literacy and English language instruction, a place for children to go after school, and the only publicly accessible means for many people to educate themselves. The campaign involved volunteers getting out petitions, contacting their aldermen and state legislators (who reported more calls on this issue than any other), and generating extensive news and editorial coverage by holding two rallies at City Hall and the first outdoor Community Library Festival. The legislature restored funding. At the same time, the library acquired a trained and respected voice in the community, The Chicago Public Library Advocates.

Creating a portfolio of funding sources will help libraries weather economic storms or swings in local city policy or leadership, and provide for a more stable revenue stream in the future that allows them to carry out responsive long-term plans.

- *Electronic postcard campaign.* Another example took the advocacy strategy online. A freelance librarian from New Jersey started an electronic postcard drive, modeled on the New Jersey Library Association's postcard drive, to protect public libraries from state budget cuts: This high-tech strategy presented information about the funding issue—local library statistics, what the library supporters wanted, what was at stake, and options for action—on its Web page. Viewers of the page were asked to link the page to their own Web page, and share it with other librarians, library friends, trustees, elected officials, library directors, staff, and patrons. Viewers could also send an electronic postcard to the House of Representatives in New Jersey. In addition, more detailed messages were printed out and mailed to the State Legislative Committee.

Leverage Funds With Others

Public libraries can find a variety of new ways to leverage their existing funds by working with other community agencies on their information and educational needs. By investing more time and effort in coordinating activities around the community, public libraries can find allies who may be willing to share services. This ought to be done with a clear message that the library's goal is to leverage and enhance resources, not to co-opt the other organizations' territory.

- The city may want to share the costs of developing a community calendar or placing kiosks throughout the community. The Web could even bridge local or regional kiosks and their distinct cultures.
- Local health care providers may want to share the cost of a library section on health or a health-oriented branch of the library near providers' offices.
- School officials may be interested in sharing their library funds to get public library support for their school libraries.
- School officials may be interested in developing a joint venture with their K–12 technology managers to reach youth throughout the community, not just in school.
- The Chamber of Commerce may be interested in working to build up the libraries' business collection, develop training programs on new communication technologies, or build a job skills center in the public library.
- Community not-for-profit agencies may be willing to work together to build a communication and reference network that would share information about the community and gather feedback in a consistent manner.

Raise Their Own Funds

Public libraries have a very strong body of support throughout the community and can go directly to that community for funding.

- *Create your own foundation.* Surveys show that most people in the community would be willing to give more resources to the local public library in order to get expanded services. While it is difficult to translate good feeling into checks, the library can work with the Friends of the Library or with professional fund-raisers to start a Library Foundation to raise money for clearly articulated needs.
- *Build privately funded collections.* Soliciting corporate and private businesses to sponsor special collections is another way to create strong links with community stakeholders and draw new sources of funding. For example, local businesses could benefit by sponsoring a collection of business magazines or part of the libraries' job skill collection. Large retail firms may find it valuable to sponsor a consumer section. Theaters and entertainment centers could sponsor a collection of books and videos on art and entertainment.

All of these actions can create goodwill between local business and the community.

Charge Fees for Selective Services

As the key community provider of access for information to all, the public library is well-positioned to provide value-added services to the broader community. This can be a source of additional funding for basic services. For example, private business, city government, or more affluent individuals may pay for timely, customized research services, Internet training, Web page design, or special services such as document delivery on demand.

- *Contracting to do research.* The Otsego District Library demonstrated its value to the community when its county decision-makers were preparing to implement a 911 service. Several companies had submitted bids, and the county asked the library to research their backgrounds and performance. The library quickly provided the county with an objective evaluation that included company profiles and credit ratings. As it turned out, the company the county was going to select had a poor credit rating. The library's timely intervention raised the status of the library as a critical information provider. The library was cited as instrumental in the selection of the 911 service vendor for the county. This type of research service clearly has value in a community with limited resources and could potentially generate revenue from private, public, and individual clients.

- *Online orders.* At University of California at San Diego (UCSD), the university library offers Library Express. Users indicate online which books they want, and a few days later the books are delivered. The service is available to any authorized user. Versions of this service are already available in some cities. To run such a service, libraries must be able to track books' whereabouts and put in place billing and collection systems similar to their methods for handling fines.

- *Library Express.* The San Francisco Public Library also has a program named Library Express, a nonprofit, fee-based research service. Aimed toward small businesses, corporations, or individuals who may not be able to access the library directly, Library Express allows users to speak with a researcher via phone and request information from an extensive database of listings on books, government documents, periodicals, newspapers, and other resources. The service guarantees delivery within 24 hours, whether by fax, messenger, Federal Express, or

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Creating a portfolio of funding sources will help libraries weather economic storms or swings in local city policy or leadership, and provide for a more stable revenue stream in the future that allows them to carry out responsive long-term plans. However, public libraries should be careful not to re-create dependence on new funding. Relying too heavily on private sector business may shift dependence from one local institution (the government) to another (a private company). As companies enter and leave communities, they could be just as unstable and unpredictable.

New sources may create new obligations that lead public libraries away from their primary focus. For example, if a private business or chamber of commerce funds a telework center in the public library, it may only serve a small group of affluent professionals and offer no relevant value to other patrons. Such sources of funds should be tailored to have broad relevance and should include marketing and informational campaigns that make other groups aware of the new services and their potential relevance. Creating a package of alternative funding sources and evaluating it annually can give the public library more insight into its financial situation.

mail. With access to a wide range of databases regarding business, technology, health, and local history, the service allows the library to reach different audiences while raising funds.

• *Lease excess space.* Local public libraries often occupy prime real estate, and many of their facilities are already networked with services. This provides libraries with an asset they can offer to the outside community. Unused space can be leased out to other businesses or agencies looking for prime locations and the benefit of the services of the public library next door. Public libraries could also rent out their facilities after hours for receptions, speaking engagements, and other gatherings, taking a cue from museums, schools, and other public community organizations. In addition to the extra revenue, such activities would mean more exposure.

• *Find new buyers for traditional services.* By expanding its scope, a public library can offer its traditional quality services to groups that need them and have money to pay for them. For example, the public library could develop literacy programs for organizations with funding, such as correctional institutions or private businesses with large immigrant populations.

• *Offer complementary services.* Modern California consumers find choices wherever they go: coffee at the book store (or books at the coffee shop), delis and web browsers at the ballpark, and entertainment at the mall. Sports teams make more money selling clothes with logos than they do selling tickets. Public libraries can sell appropriate items such as coffees, books, literary T-shirts, local history photos, and so forth to expand the social pleasures of a library visit.

For more information about the organizations and services in this section, contact:

Friends of the Oakland Public Library
721 Washington Street
Oakland, CA 94607
Phone: 510-444-0473

Otsego District Library
URL: http://www.cris.com/~epcs/ocl.htm

University of California at San Diego (UCSD)
Library Express
E-mail: libexp@ucsd.edu
URL: http://www.ucsd.edu/lx/

San Francisco Public Library
Larkin and McAllister Street
San Francisco, CA 94102-4796
Phone: 415-557-4400

5. EVALUATE NEEDS AND SERVICES

STRATEGIC CHOICES

Definition

Evaluations must be an integral part of any set of strategic activities that local public libraries adopt. This includes both evaluations of the library's services and ongoing tracking of the community to identify needs, pains, and problems. If libraries get into the habit of tracking satisfaction and use of services regularly, it will be easier to make course corrections in the strategic plan, to retool services, to identify new user groups for the public library, and to provide good solid evidence for legislation, funding, and other important decisions.

WHY EVALUATE?

California communities are diverse and complex, and technology is changing our notions of information and access in ways that we don't quite understand yet. It makes new services possible and creates new needs for many. To strategically choose the best uses of technology and ensure that key groups have access to appropriate services, public libraries must regularly identify the needs and desires of its community.

As shown in the California Library Survey, different groups have different experiences with technology. Some Californians prefer to get their information by reading, while others prefer to get it by talking with someone, for example. Some groups have difficulty obtaining legal information while others state that they usually find what they need. Nonwhite Californians are much more likely to say that learning new skills and computer skills are essential for success at work. Public libraries must work to meet the needs of all these groups and more.

ACTION STEPS

Surveys, focus groups, discussion forums, user panels, and other research strategies give the community many ways of communicating their needs to the public library. An ongoing strategy for evaluating community needs will contribute to building a closer, more intimate relationship between the public library and the community. This relationship will be important in staying ahead of the community to develop new services and build the political and volunteer support needed to operate effectively. Public libraries should take steps like the following to identify community needs and appropriate responses.

Identify Community Needs

Before planning future services, it is essential that public libraries develop a good understanding of their community—its demographics, economics, and social and political issues—and how these translate into information and public library service needs and new opportunities. In California, the demographic composition of the state has changed dramatically in the past ten years. More people with different ethnic, cultural, and language backgrounds will interact with local institutions and require different services.

Information about these requirements will be an important part of the design and implementation of new services that will bring new groups of patrons into the public library. Some examples and suggestions for keeping in touch with the community's desires are listed below.

- *The Alberta Library's customer-driven services.* The first goal of the Alberta Library in Canada is to provide customer-driven services. Library planners conduct a professional provincewide survey of customers and potential customers and partners and potential partners to assess needs and existing barriers. The library also has developed its own "Bill of Rights" that includes service guarantees and warranties outlining the services customers can expect from the library. To make certain they're carried out, the

Strengths and Weaknesses

To run an effective community public library program, it is essential to measure user expectations, preferences, and satisfaction levels. Collaborating with other community agencies (including local universities) to develop a research agenda that tracks community issues, information needs, and technology use patterns can provide ongoing data and input for the planning process. Sharing the burden of the cost would help all agencies involved, and sharing the intellectual development of the research will bring a richer, broader perspective to the results.

While these activities require additional allocations of library resources, they should not be considered at the expense of other programs and activities. Public library directors should recognize these measurements as part of their jobs and the cost of providing quality services. Library directors need to encourage staff training in evaluations and market research.

Alberta library is establishing customer service excellence awards, as well as making customer service a priority in evaluating librarians.

- *Friends of the Library as listening posts.* Friends of the Library are critical community advocates for drawing support for library initiatives. Friends of the Library and other community advocacy groups should be leveraged as listening posts in the community. They are good agents for soliciting views from the public about library services and information-gathering pains. The Libraries for the Future organization has an extensive database of success stories and tips related to activities of Friends of the Library groups.

- *Study circles for public involvement.* Study circles are small-group, democratic, highly participatory discussions that allow citizens to analyze a problem their community faces. In the study circle, individuals share their firsthand knowledge of an issue, examine different views and solutions, and draw from members' experiences and insights to decide what practical measures can be taken. Groups in Maine, Minnesota, Ohio, Massachusetts, and California have used this technique to open dialogue about a variety of local issues. The public library could leverage this technique to get firsthand insights and experiences about important issues, such as how the city or regional information infrastructure can work with public libraries.

Conduct User Evaluations

Just as some delivery trucks have the slogan "How am I driving?" and a phone number on the back of their vehicles, public libraries should provide users with easy ways to give feedback. Many public libraries already provide suggestion boxes and evaluation forms at reference desks and other conspicuous places. The key is to be systematic and professional about the way this information is collected.

- *Benchmark services.* Benchmarking public library services against the best service models in other industries will provide solid objectives for developing quality services and reasonable measures of accountability to end-users. This will help the public library staff evaluate user responses and improve services.

- *Conduct annual and periodic user evaluations.* User evaluations are necessary for the long-term evolution of services that continue to meet the needs of a changing user base. Regular evaluations can be done in a variety of formats: brief phone surveys, questionnaires, talks and evaluation forms at local civic clubs, newspaper ads with a phone number and e-mail address, online questionnaires. Friends of the Library can also be used for in-depth phone surveys (seven people call five people each, for example). Service ought to be evaluated regularly, in an interactive process, so that results can be compared across time, and changes in usage and other characteristics are clear. It is imperative that any evaluation or assessment include non-English or linguistic minority groups to fully represent the community.

- *Build contacts with evaluators.* Partnering with local universities and community colleges is a good way to conduct such evaluations if resources or professional services are limited. Teachers in sociology, anthropology, and political science classes are constantly on the lookout for class projects that help evaluate long-term trends and consequences.

Walk the Streets

Direct participation of public library staff—particularly of the library director—is important for experiencing firsthand the sentiments, emotions, and reality of the community. Visibility of library staff will help build trust and put the library in a community leadership position, increasing other local organizations' willingness to collaborate.

A newly appointed high school principal in New Hampshire used this approach to turn his school around. Before he took over, the public perception of the school was poor. He realized that he needed to go out into the community to understand their concerns and dreams for their children before he could assume the role of principal.

He began by meeting one on one with parents and school board members—at their homes, over coffee, anywhere but on school turf. Every person he met with made a commitment to do something extra for the school. These commitments turned into the school's tutoring program, special skills classes, transportation for field trips, typing assistance, and other volunteer activities. When people complained that few parents could attend the first parents' conference, he wrote to local businesses and asked them to release workers with children so they could make it. As a result, more than 90% of parents have attended these meetings in the past 13 years.

This type of visibility is essential for public library staff to engage the local community to care about the public library and support it with personal time and other resources.

For more information about the organizations and services in this section, contact:

Matt Leighninger
Study Circles Resource Center
P.O. Box 203
Pomfret, CT 06258
203-928-2616

DEVELOP NEW INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

6. DEVELOP NEW COMMUNITY SERVICES

STRATEGIC CHOICES

Definition

The community public library is in a unique position to place itself at the heart of a community's information channels. The public library should not be just the depository of information but the locus of communication, coordination, and exchange of a variety of services. As such, the public library has the opportunity to span a range of services, increase its value to the community, and position itself as an important broker of high-quality information, assistance, and service in the community.

WHY COMMUNITY SERVICES?

Technology is making information more accessible and, as a result, it is changing the way people communicate, redefining community boundaries, and enabling the formation of new and different kinds of communities. To stay abreast of this changing world, public libraries need to develop services that engage both current and new users. As a key community resource and coordinator of information, the local public library can help solidify community support for its own programs and services, develop more opportunities for community building among local groups, and provide important new services.

ACTION STEPS

There are many ways that public libraries can develop, coordinate, and collaborate with others to provide meaningful human services and facilitate community building among diverse groups. Possible services for which public libraries are particularly suited include health information, literacy programs, general information, regional community networks, community action initiatives, and public discussion groups.

Maintain Better Health Through Information

Public librarians are responding to the widespread demand for better quality and easy-to-understand medical and health information by developing an array of materials and services, all available locally and free of charge. Two examples show the range of activities and suggest possibilities for future development:

- The HIV Information Center in the West Hollywood Public Library provides up-to-the-minute information on transmission and treatment of AIDS through the AIDS Information Network, a database that connects to the U.S. and European AIDS research groups, AIDS clinics, hospitals, and the U.S. Center for Disease Control.

- The San Joaquin Valley Library System, based in Fresno, has developed links between rural libraries and regional medical libraries to improve public access to medical information and has developed guidelines for consumer health information references used throughout California.

Promote Literacy Now and in the Future

The ability to read, particularly to read English, and to use information to answer a question or take action is at the foundation of empowered citizenship—indeed, of quality of life in general. Reading and the functional use of English, not only at the individual but at the family level as well, is critical for access to education, employment, career mobility, and earning power. Surveys report a growing divide between those Californians who speak English at home and can interact with others in the community in English, and those who rely on a native language. A family literary focus will encourage the value of literacy and education.

At the same time, the pervasiveness of information and communications technology is changing the definition of "literacy." Computer literacy, online

As the notion of literacy continues to evolve, Californians from many age, ethnic, and income groups will need to expand their literacy skills beyond basic reading and writing.

literacy, and graphic literacy are growing increasingly important. As the notion of literacy continues to evolve, Californians from many age, ethnic, and income groups will need to expand their literacy skills beyond basic reading and writing. The California State Library's California Literacy Campaign provides grants and technical assistance to public libraries involved in community literacy programs, such as the following:

- The San Rafael Public Library offers a tutor-based literacy program that serves a growing number of immigrants from Latin America and Southeast Asia. Designed to reflect and respond to the great cultural diversity of the local population, the program includes monthly family story times and gift books to build home libraries. In return, participants teach tutors their own languages, establishing a basis for equality and respect. Reading activities, bilingual performances, and special events engage participants of all ages in the cultural heritage of the Philippines, regions of Southeast Asia, and several Hispanic cultures. A special feature is a learning lab with computers and software programs for use by literacy students and their families.

- The County of Los Angeles Public Library took part in a landmark collaboration with the Los Angeles Department of Health Services in developing and implementing a program called "Begin at the Beginning with Books." Bilingual outreach librarians provide literacy training and early-reader materials at prenatal clinics that serve low-income Hispanic women. They maintain contact with the women after the birth of the children, encouraging them to take part in the library's literacy and parenting programs and to participate with their infants and children in "lap-sits," story hours, workshops, and other cultural programs.

- Plugged In, a nonprofit organization in several cities, brings the educational opportunities of new technologies to children, teenagers, and low-income families. In one program, Plugged In kids create and share their own personal Web pages that include artwork, stories, and thoughts about being young and living in East Palo Alto. The kids have become so proficient at designing Web pages that they now design and build Web pages for a fee. This program provides many other types of community-based projects such as Families in Transition, which shares stories and insights about urban immigrant families.

Build Community with Information and Communication

Engaging the community in activities that enhance cohesiveness, shared responsibility, and empowerment is an increasingly important function of the public library. As a place to gather, a source of quality information, a catalyst for change, or a neutral negotiating body, the public library has a range of ways it can bring community members together around important issues. In this way, it creates a kind of social capital within the community. Strong community activism and citizen politics require a foundation of good information and communication to address important public issues.

Create Regional Community Networks

Regional community networks are grassroots computer-based information services provided by and for the local community. They can help community members solve problems, make informed decisions, and enhance a sense of cohesiveness. As an alternative or supplement to the city government's online public information services, these services often include access to issues concerning local government, community events, business, or school districts. Community networks are often committed to providing free public access, and for many such networks, the local public library is an important ally and partner in providing that access and creating trust among users.

Making a community network can be as easy as putting up a bulletin board service or creating a Web home page. A more advanced community network involves an organized attempt by numerous people to create an ongoing process that maintains the system. Examples include:

- *La Plaza Telecommunity.* The La Plaza de Taos network in Taos, New Mexico, offers a wide variety of technological, human, organizational, business, and project-based services, as well as free access to e-mail and the Web and technical consulting and support. Its Web site offers access to community calendars and information about other social services, such as education, government, employment, and health care resources. To ensure broad access, La Plaza offers training, fund raising, grant writing, and business development, which at the same time work to build awareness of the project. La Plaza is also building collaborations with local, regional, and national organizations and corporations, organizing a Community Advisory Forum to assess cross-cultural needs, developing regional and national information resources, and offering business and marketing assistance to local businesses.
- *Charlotte's Web.* This is a North Carolina regional community network that teams with the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County to offer helpful local information in partnership with community organizations. The collaborative effort means innovative new services for the community, such as office space and 22 public access sites in branch libraries throughout the region. It operates a virtual library and trains library patrons to use the Web, scanners, printers, CD-ROMs, and other multimedia tools. Through Charlotte's Web, the user can tap into local business information, sports and entertainment, transportation, health care, education and "just for kids."

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The public library is in a key position to provide public access to relevant information on key issues by developing and providing innovative and integrated services, such as community networks. Developing these new services can revitalize the role of the public library as the central information hub in the community and as the organization that is the most in touch with and responsive to community needs.

Collaborating with other key community players can help the public library and its partners reach the public in a meaningful way. By proactively interacting with the community, the public library can increase its visibility and strengthen its role in the community ecosystem. Integrating technology into this web ensures the library's participation in the future of community networks, public participation, and information referral.

However, services such as these require a large commitment of time and money, and may pull the libraries' resources from other investments. Public libraries must choose appropriate and dedicated partners who bring important resources to the venture. Partnering with community organizations to introduce information technologies addresses the issue of informational literacy within the community. However, the exchange and procurement of software, training, and maintenance must be clearly defined. Public libraries must be aware of their communities' needs and respond to key issues first.

Broker Information for Community Service and Action

Other local networks provide the information and contacts to support human service initiatives. InfoSanDiego and a multitude of Free-Nets are good examples of information exchange that libraries could facilitate in their own local communities by providing information sources, physical space to house the services, and information management skills.

- *InfoSanDiego.* InfoSanDiego-Talk is an independent, grassroots electronic discussion group formed to gather public input for designing city services. The discussion group allows participants to join discussions on issues such as the United States–Mexico border, paying for online public services, voting on government bills, housing, and more. The services that have been proposed for the forum so far are government information, social services, culture and entertainment, transportation, city promotion, education, and commonly used information such as reference materials, newsletters, and directories.

- *Free-Nets.* Free-Nets, provided by the National Public Telecomputing Network, are local, grassroots electronic bulletin board forums for exchanging community information. They number approximately 50 and comprise more than 380,000 registered users around the country. The Cleveland Free-Net (one of the earliest free networks) provides a free, shared electronic space for more than 100 community organizations including Alcoholics Anonymous, Habitat for Humanity, the Handicap Center, the Lesbian/Gay Community Service Center, United Way, the Scouting Center, several museums, and many health services. There are also question-and-answer forums and many other opportunities for Cleveland users to interact with other community members on a regular basis.

Facilitate Quality Discussions

In addition to the high-tech option, there are many other ways the public library can facilitate good discussions in the community on critical issues such as family violence, abortion, legal issues, education, and so forth. The public library is often a symbolic neutral location that can provide a nonthreatening environment for hard-to-reach groups to participate in community forums and discussions. Examples of projects that would bring new groups into contact with library services, facilities, and staff include:

- The Public Conversations Project in Cambridge, Massachusetts, promotes constructive dialogue on the topic of abortion—an extremely volatile and personal issue. The project creates a safe place for honest conversation and public dialogue, involving many different perspectives from the community.

- The Common Ground Network for Life and Choice has developed a series of workshops devoted to pro-life and pro-choice issues. Based on grassroots requests, similar initiatives have been developed in many other cities, including St. Louis, Cleveland, Denver, Cincinnati, Pensacola, and Washington, D.C.

- The Master Teacher in Family Life program empowers poor families to develop skills to become leaders in their communities and facilitate information exchange about important health, education, and employment issues. Training modules teach natural leaders in poor communities the skills they need to create effective internal communication and to sustain a network of support for those who want to use their new knowledge to make changes in their family life.

- The library could also serve to facilitate communication between individuals who want to learn each other's language—Mandarin speakers can teach Mandarin to English speakers and vice versa. This would promote intercultural communication and help bring the community together.

For more information about the organizations and services in this section, contact:

HIV Information Center
Librarian: Nancy Mattoon
715 North Vicente Blvd.
West Hollywood, CA 90069
Phone: 310-652-5340

San Joaquin Valley Library System
Sharon Vandercook
2420 Mariposa Street
Fresno, CA 93721
Phone: 209-488-6735
Fax: 209-488-3229

San Rafael Public Library
Barbara Barwood
1100 E. Street
San Rafael, CA 94901
Phone: 415-485-3318
Fax: 415-485-3112
E-mail: marinlit@aol.com

Marin Literacy Program, West Marin Office
Sharon Mooney
P.O. Box 224
Olema, CA 94950
Phone/Fax: 415-663-1849
E-mail: moonsl@aol.com

County of Los Angeles Public Library—Begin at the Beginning Program
Sue Muller, Coordinator
Phone: 310-940-8504

Plugged In
1923 University Avenue
East Palo Alto, CA 94303
Phone: 415-322-1134
Fax: 415-322-6147
E-mail: info@pluggedin.org

La Plaza Telecommunity Foundation, Inc.
224 Cruz Alta Road
Taos, NM 87571
Phone: 505-758-1836
URL: http://laplaza.taos.nm.us/

Charlotte's Web
c/o Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County
310 N. Tryon St.
Charlotte, N.C. 28202
Phone: 704-336-7771
Steve Snow, project director
E-mail: shsnow@charweb.org

InfoSanDiego
URL: http://rohan.sdsu.edu:80/infosandiego/

Free-Nets (National PublicTelecomputing Network)
P.O. Box 1987
Cleveland, OH 44106
E-mail: nptn@nptn.org
URL: http://www.nptn.org/

Public Conversations Project of the Family Institute of Cambridge
2 Appleton St.
Cambridge, MA 02138
Phone: 617-491-1585 or 547-5988
Fax: 617-868-5982

The Common Ground Network for Life and Choice
A Project of Search for Common Ground
Laura Chasin, Director
1601 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
Phone: 202-265-4300
Fax: 202-232-6718
URL: http:/cpn.journalism.wisc.edu/cpn/sections/topics/family-intergen/stories-studies/commonground_lifechoice.html

Civic Practices Network (CPN)
Center for Human Resources
Florence Heller School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare
Brandeis University
60 Turner Street
Waltham, MA 02154
Phone: 617-736-4890
Fax: 617-736-4891
E-mail: cpn@tiac.net
URL: http://www.journalism.wisc.edu:80/cpn/sections/topics/family-intergen/stories-studies/masterteacher_family.html

7. Create and Organize Intellectual Capital

Strategic
Choices

Definition

The public library can become not just an archive but a publisher of information. Public libraries can establish a process for gathering and organizing historical and current information about the community in a way that adds value to current and future users.

Why Intellectual Capital?

California communities are changing a great deal—people are moving, technology is improving, and the composition of communities is becoming more diverse. Public libraries can be the catalysts and guardians of intellectual development, historical preservation, and current public debate about issues that matter most to the local community.

Because public libraries have the content, process, and technical sophistication to sort and organize information unlike any other local institution, they are in a unique position to act as agents of continuity. They can help set up community processes that facilitate discussion and keep a record of ongoing debates and discussions. In the future, the public library will be both a publisher and distributor of information.

Action Steps

Public libraries can create and distribute community knowledge and information in many ways. What follow are examples of the public library as archive and publisher.

Public Library as Community Archive

One role of the library is to create a way for members of the local community to put together an archive of the city.

- *The Berkeley Virtual Community Project.* The goal of the Berkeley Virtual Community Project (a cooperative effort of Bay Area high-tech companies and the University of California at Berkeley) is to use the technology of the Internet to create a feeling of community and a sense of neighborhood for the city's residents. Researchers, local historians, computer scientists, and visionaries from the Berkeley community gathered historic archives while artists, architects, and graphic designers captured the physical essence of Berkeley's landscape, culture, and history. Virtual Berkeley will be accessible to all by means of free public terminals located throughout the city. This is a prime example of an electronic gathering spot where local citizens can learn about their own neighborhoods and contribute their own artifacts into the record of past and present.

- *Community nets.* Designed to bring education for active citizenship into the information age, the Civic Practices Network (CPN), based at Brandeis University, provides communities with critical tools for self-empowerment. The mission of CPN is to tell the stories of civic innovation, share practical wisdom, and exchange the most effective tools for raising the skill level of common public work, including training manuals, "best practice" guides, and evaluative tools. CPN's World Wide Web pages provide a multimedia forum for exchanging tools and experiences, and shaping these for use wherever people gather to do civic work—schools, community centers, public libraries, government agencies, private businesses, homes, and churches. This information is available online to the public as a common resource for practical civic education, responsible community action, and democratic policymaking. It can be printed out, photocopied, and assembled as customized workbooks, course readers, or resource guides. Videos, manuals, audio tapes, and project evaluations are also available. This service is free, though highly valuable—it's a model for managing continuity within communities.

Library as Publisher

Since schools have begun to connect to the Internet, classrooms around the country have begun appropriating the technology of the Web to learn a new medium, find information, and facilitate projects within and among classrooms. School and classroom home

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

pages have been using the Web to publish materials about themselves and to link with the rest of the Internet. In this way, students' work, teachers' ideas, and parents' comments are all linked to shared resources. Likewise, public libraries can publish community information or provide the forms that allow others to do so.

- *Arbor Heights Art.* One school that uses its Internet site this way is the Arbor Heights Elementary School in Seattle, Washington. A colorful graphic interface greets visitors, allowing them to choose among an array of local community information, student and teacher work, and other Internet links. Once visitors sign in to the guest book, they can go on to explore the Cool Writers Magazine, an online magazine dedicated to publishing kids' projects as a means of giving them a global audience. "If your school has pages with cool writing, let us know," the page invites visitors. "We will add a link to your school." In addition, "What's new" and "What's cool" icons show how frequently the site is updated. A quick look at the visitor count display shows how successful the community project is.

- *Community Information at Blacksburg.* The Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library offers assistance to community organizations by means of the Web. Powered by an 8150 PowerMac server donated by Apple Computers, the library can provide civic and nonprofit organizations a place to post community information. As a publisher for local organizations, the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library becomes an even greater resource to the community. It gives organizations greater visibility, trains them to create HTML documents and post them on the Web, and allows them to retain control over content. The library also provides Web links to local government information and local schools and provides tools to search the Web sites of the library and Blacksburg electronic village.

- *Managing forms on Web pages.* Public libraries can help agencies and groups with Web pages manage feedback from the community. Several sites on the Web have feedback forms that allow users to send back comments, e-mail the page manager, or ask further questions. Web home pages that conduct surveys or process online orders make frequent use of Web forms, called Computer Graphics Interface (CGI) Scripts. Typically, technical managers are required to collect, track, and organize the information extracted from these forms. This job requires skills libraries are familiar with, including filtering, sorting, and distributing large quantities of information. Libraries can perform such services, which can be of critical importance for local community agencies and other groups trying to take full advantage of new technologies.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Developing programs that position the public library as a creator and organizer of intellectual capital addresses the need of the community to have better, more useful information. The public library is best suited to weave connections across organizations and agencies in the community. It can bring a comprehensive understanding of processes, resources, contacts, and feedback mechanisms while providing a location (either physical or electronic) for public dialogue about questions and issues.

The downside of this strategy is that such an undertaking requires full commitment from professional staff, as well as full-time management and coordination. Librarians may need some training to take on this new role. Partnering with other local information administrators in the community, such as K–12 technology coordinators—many of whom are already creating classroom and school district Web pages—can be a good strategy for quickly getting up to speed. Together, librarians and K–12 technology specialists can become a powerful team in local communities.

For more information about the organizations and services in this section, contact:

Berkeley Virtual Community Project
URL: http://server.Berkeley.EDU/virtual-berkeley/

Civic Practices Network (CPN)
Center for Human Resources
Florence Heller School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare
Brandeis University
60 Turner Street
Waltham, MA 02154
Phone: 617-736-4890
Fax: 617-736-4891
E-mail: cpn@tiac.net
URL: http://fount.journalism.wisc.edu/cpn/cpn.html

Arbor Heights
URL: http://www.halcyon.com/arborhts/arborhts.html>

8. Shift from Analog to Digital

Strategic
Choices

Definition

One of the public libraries' most important roles is to ensure that the community's information needs are met in the appropriate format, whether by book, database, or the World Wide Web. Technologies are changing so quickly, however, that public libraries must have a well-reasoned plan for integrating the many new technologies with traditional offerings. Only then will the whole community continue to have seamless access to a widening network of information.

Why Digital Information?

Information storage methods are rapidly shifting from analog to digital formats. Analog formats are those in which data is represented by continuously variable physical qualities. Analog formats are subject to data degradation and constrained by the physical properties of the media. Traditional recording methods and phone lines are good examples.

Digital formats are those that translate information into digital or numerical data and store it on various physical media where it can be efficiently processed and accessed in a variety of different formats. Large quantities of digital data are easily stored in relatively compact media and can be manipulated by computers. There is little data degradation. Digitized information is so inexpensive to store and offers such a wide range of choice for access that it is becoming a common currency in many aspects of daily life, from banking to driving a car. Most computers are digital, as are compact discs.

The storing, processing, and accessing of digital data requires fairly sophisticated technologies and raises serious issues about access. These issues range from the affordability of specialized, high-cost equipment to the complexity of new skills required for navigating, filtering, and analyzing digital information. Libraries must develop clear policies for ensuring a level of universal access to these new information technologies.

Action Steps

The successful integration of old and new formats can help library users get the information they need when they need it. Combined, old and new technologies offer a wider range of choice, keep down costs, consolidate library work efforts, attract funding and support, and change users' expectations of library service. To be successful, this effort requires a thorough evaluation of options and objectives to determine what services or programs the technology should support.

Bringing in new technologies provides the library with previously out-of-range possibilities, but technologies should not be installed for the sake of technology. Good service is always the goal. Understanding the fit between various technologies and the type of information each provides is the key to offering seamless new services. What follow are possible action steps for making a smooth transition.

Open Up the Library to New Users

To make the best use of information technologies, libraries need to fully grasp their impacts, both social and technological. How will these digital technologies support the ways people currently gather information, and how will they change them?

The Center for Technology at the Seattle Public Library is addressing these questions. The center aims to work with different groups in the community to increase the public's comfort level with new technologies, to apply state of the art information technologies towards the traditional purpose of the public library, and to provide information for making decisions, continual learning, and increased civic participation.

Within six months of offering full Internet access in 23 locations, it had 60,000 user connections per month.

Libraries must monitor the community's preferences to provide a balance between traditional and new media.

One of its successes was *Mark Twain Alive!*, which featured a presentation to a group of high school students followed by a dialogue; a second high school participated via Internet video conference. The idea was to bring the author to life by using technology and telecommunications to create a richer, more engaging experience. The emphasis was on how the technology was used to create better content rather than on the technology itself.

Broker Innovative Information Services

Another important role of the public library is to broker innovative services using technology—either by providing the services itself or coordinating with another service provider. The public library already obtains vast amounts of information and reformats it for easy access. If the public library positioned itself as not merely the archive of such information but as the broker who redistributed this information in a value-added way, the library would leverage already refined skills to serve community needs and bring new users and/or funds into the library. The British Library Document Supply Centre (BLDSC) has succeeded in doing just that in a number of ways. Its exemplary service policy adds a professionalism that strengthens its image.

The BLDSC provides a rapid and comprehensive document delivery and interlibrary loan service to various researchers and organizations worldwide. Acting as a broker for information sorting and dispersal, the BLDSC handles almost four million requests from some 17,000 customers a year (some of which may be libraries). The BLDSC collects material in all subject areas, although it focuses on science, technology, and medicine. Information can be requested in a variety of ways: mail, fax, e-mail, database hosts, or online connections to the BLDSC's automated request processing system. Requests are normally handled within 24 to 48 hours of receipt. Copies are dispatched by first class mail.

Integrate With Traditional Media

Libraries must monitor the community's preferences to provide a balance between traditional and new media. Helping users find information conveniently in an appropriate format requires a seamless integration of traditional and cutting-edge technologies.

Examples of libraries or institutions that have done this well include:

- *Virtual Electronic Learning Company (VELCOM).* Designed by a team at Indiana University/Purdue University at Indianapolis, VELCOM's strategy is to offer collaborative learning by means of networked information. VELCOM seeks to integrate the concepts underlying new technologies, such as collaboration, distributed work, information-intensiveness, and rapid change into its teaching and learning model.

- *Planetree Health clipping service.* The Planetree Health Resource Center offers an extensive paper-based clipping service. Why paper-based in the digital age, when a computer can easily capture and store a continuous stream of downloadable articles? First, such online databases already exist. Second, since the center has limited funds and users who speak Vietnamese and Spanish in addition to English—and may not have much experience with technology—a paper-based service gives better access to a greater number of people who may not otherwise have access. The articles are housed in a set of files forming a large island in the middle of one of the center's main rooms. Several people can gather around the files, open drawers, peruse the articles, and take notes while they browse.

Identify Ways in Which Technology Can Provide 24-Hour Service

Information technologies such as the Internet function independently of time and place, creating an opportunity to provide service to customers anywhere at anytime. Likewise, library users are coming to expect library service around the clock and from any number of locations. Implementing ways for technology to support a timeless bridge between the library and its community will promote the library as current and responsive to the needs of individuals and organizations.

The International Customer Service Association (ICSA), a professional organization dedicated to understanding quality customer service worldwide, has taken such steps. The organization offers around-the-clock access, with the following specific services that any library could consider implementing:

- An electronic bulletin board is accessible 24 hours a day from a computer and modem for discussing programs and services.
- An automated fax-on-demand service allows members to call and request relevant information via fax, which is sent immediately.
- An e-mail address connects individuals to ICSA headquarters at the user's convenience.
- A toll-free phone number staffed by qualified ICSA employees means questions and requests can be answered as they arise.

This important service distinguishes ICSA from other associations by providing information through a web of communication tools.

Expand Services

Information technology has great potential for bringing funds into the library, as well increasing its visibility in the community. Leveraging technology means considering solutions perhaps outside the bounds of the traditional public library. Other organi-

---

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strong and innovative technology planning presents an unprecedented opportunity for public libraries to use new tools to connect with a broad audience. New users who are appropriately introduced to the skills required for satisfying information needs through digital formats will become network literate, a self-reinforcing skill. More experienced users will recognize the library for riding the wave of change and thus will be likely to use the library more often.

Information technologies such as the Internet are proliferating at an unprecedented pace. The public library is in a unique position to use these tools as springboards for commercial services to the community, such as Web page design, information delivery services, and technology training and assessment for local businesses, government, and schools.

However, the overwhelming pace of change means the public library must also stay flexible. Network connections will grow faster, and the Web will look entirely different in 12 months. The introduction of new tools must be understood within the broader contextual shift in information gathering.

New technologies must be integrated appropriately with existing technologies that may still be the best source for some types of information. Cautious investment in equipment and training is required for building technology labs and establishing network connections. This process requires evaluating community needs, solidifying objectives, and providing extensive training to ensure that the technologies are appropriately woven into the fabric of community needs. The most important lesson is that public libraries must keep the needs of their community at the forefront of their technology strategies and not fall into the "toy trap"—acquiring technologies merely for the sake of having them.

zations may offer important lessons for using technology innovatively. Public libraries will benefit by asking themselves the following questions:

- How do the top *Fortune* 500 companies use technology to support and improve their customer service?
- What new services are emerging on the Web that could not be provided elsewhere?
- How are small companies and retail stores adding service dimensions to their business using online capabilities, fax, and telephone?
- What are the drivers shaping and encouraging face-to-face meetings and gatherings in the community and how would this affect the physical use of library space?

For more information about the organizations and services in this section, contact:

Seattle Public Library
1000 4th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104-1193
E-mail: webmaster@spl.lib.wa.us
URL: http://www.spl.lib.wa.us

The British Library Document Supply Centre
Boston Spa
Wetherby
West Yorkshire
LS23 7BQ
Phone: +44 1937 546060
Fax: +44 1937 546333
E-mail: dsc-customer-services@bl.uk

International Customer Service Association (ICSA)
URL: http://www.icsa.com/

Virtual Electronic Learning Company (VELCOM)
Indiana University/Purdue University at Indianapolis
A project submitted to the Coalition for Networked Information
21 Dupont Circle, NW
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202-892-0884
Fax: 202-296-5098
Contact: Joan K. Lippincott
E-mail: joan@cni.org

Planetree Health Resource Center
98 North 17th Street
San Jose, CA 95112
Phone: 408-977-4549

REORGANIZE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

9. CREATE COMMUNITY LIBRARY SPACE

STRATEGIC CHOICES

Definition

Libraries need to rethink their use of space to accommodate their new customers' various needs.

WHY COMMUNITY SPACE?

New technologies, new flexible work styles, and new expectations from customers are placing pressure on the physical layout of schools, shopping malls, businesses, entertainment complexes, and government agencies. In response, many organizations are redesigning their spaces to reach out to new customers.

Public libraries are confronted by the same pressures, and their buildings may also need to be designed or redesigned for 21st century interactivity. These "face-lifts" can range from redecorating, to minor construction and renovation, to completely tearing down the building and creating a new one, to moving to a new location altogether.

ACTION STEPS

Public libraries must consider various ways of adapting spaces to the changing needs of its clients. The functions, activities, and work styles of the 21st century will drive the design of new space and new uses of current facilities.

Consider a Village Square Model

If a public library is selecting a new location, it should look for a place in the village square or another central location. In England, for example, an innovative educational, recreational, and retirement community was proposed just outside of London to create a "community within a community," offering restaurants, child care, a concert hall, a museum, a travel bureau, schools, a chapel, and other services. Such a site is ideal for a library, which can be a valuable asset to the village square. Public libraries in established communities should consider encouraging other community organizations to build or share space near the library and offer complementary services.

Collaborate With Others to Offer Adjunct Services

Many organizations and businesses offer products and services that complement a public library's offerings, thus creating a full-service location. This can benefit patrons who want "one-stop shopping." Some examples include:

- *Copy or print shop.* Many public libraries' copy machines and computer printers frustrate patrons because they are old, offer limited functions, and often do not work. A Kinko's or other copy shop co-located at the library could ease the patrons' frustrations while offering competitive rates for all kinds of services, as well as state-of-the-art equipment the library wouldn't have to maintain on its own.

- *Child or elder care.* Public libraries are widely perceived as safe locations. A child care center, operated by an outside agency, could make it easier for families to visit the library, while at the same time encouraging literacy and early childhood education. In this way, children are encouraged to grow up identifying the library as an important and familiar educational resource. Some ethnic groups, especially immigrants new to the United States, do not perceive a link between the public library and education. A center for elder care can work in a similar way, offering supervision and library services to those no longer as able to help themselves.

- *Gift shop.* Just as hospitals and museums have gift shops, public libraries can operate gift shops offering note cards, T-shirts, and other paraphernalia promoting literacy, loyalty to the library, and a sense of identity or ownership. Gift shops could also be operated by boutique owners or florists or other organizations that could rent the space and stay open during library hours.

- *Used book store.* Many public libraries sell donated books, which are displayed in a corner of the library or in large bins. A separate area of the library can be designed to resemble a used bookstore with comfortable reading areas. Books can be bought and sold at reasonable rates, and such a space can become the community's main focus for recycling books from home—and benefit the library at the same time.

- *Businesses aimed at education.* A variety of firms and not-for-profit organizations offer courses to students who are interested in continuing education or preparation for college. The public library could encourage a col-

Public libraries must be redesigned for 21st century interactivity.

lege testing preparatory firm to colocate. In addition to courses, these services offer tests, audiocassettes, and other library materials. Such an arrangement would provide another purpose for the library's meeting rooms and audiovisual equipment, as well as a potential funding source.

- *Coffee shops, espresso bars, and restaurants.* Readers are used to enjoying a cup of coffee while they peruse the newspaper. At a national chain bookstore, Barnes and Noble, customers can select any book and review it while visiting the Starbuck's cafe located inside or adjacent to the bookstore. The Harold Washington Library Center in Chicago offers a coffee shop, but other public libraries could just as easily offer other kinds of restaurants, depending on community interests.

Design New Workspaces

Today's children are being taught in new ways at school. In the past, students sat at their desks and faced the teacher. Today, teaching is often done with the students sitting in small groups, examining a problem, and discussing how to solve it. The teacher's role has changed from lecturer and presenter to facilitator and coach. These changes in school are also reflected in the workplace, with increasing value placed on interdisciplinary teams supported by a wide range of tools as they collaborate to address complex issues.

These changes in the way people work and the tools they use will affect the future physical space of public libraries. In addition, consumers have an increasing number of options at home, at work, and in stores, and if a library wants to continue to attract their patronage, it needs to offer more choices embedded in its physical plant. Options for addressing the demands of 21st century patrons include:

- *Information commons.* After a thorough evaluation of the needs of a library in the 21st century, the University of Southern California's Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Library opened its doors in the fall of 1994. It operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week during the school year and features an information commons—100 multimedia workstations for conducting electronic research, writing papers, exchanging e-mail, or surfing the Internet. All of the computers—PCs, Macintoshes, and Sun SPARCstations—feature CD-ROM drives and high-speed data lines. These computer workspaces allow two or more individuals to sit in front of the screen and work together. Likewise, public libraries can combine their library catalogues on computers such as these, and for an additional fee, provide access to specialized online databases (for example, Medline, Dun & Bradstreet Market databases, Nexis, and others).

- *Large and small meeting rooms.* People work in different ways, individually or in groups of varying sizes, and they all must be accommodated. For example, private rooms for small groups with computer dataports where users can plug notebooks into online resources can be useful. These rooms are so popular at USC that they are booked until after midnight. Public libraries could also offer chalkboards or whiteboards (ideally with copying capabilities) and flip charts. Also useful are larger meeting rooms that accommodate 20 to 40 people for community and library meetings or workshops. Some libraries have constructed even larger auditoriums. The San Francisco Library, for example, will feature a 300-seat auditorium with an adjacent studio for taping audio and video productions. These rooms can be rented out for additional revenue.

- *Space for individuals.* Public libraries must continue to offer small, individual cubicles for privacy and concentration, as well as centrally located areas filled with tables for patrons using resources off the shelves. The San Francisco Public Library features tables wired so that patrons with laptops can sit anywhere and browse the library's offerings. And many patrons with laptops will simply want to connect to a power outlet so they can work without a network connection.

- *Printing and audiovisual centers.* While many experts have long predicted a paperless office thanks to the advent of computers, just the opposite has proved to be true. Leavey Library is a good example. About 50,000 pages are printed per month at the printing center connected to all the computer workstations and dataports. But not all information gathering is paper-based. The Audio Visual Center of the Salem Public Library in Oregon provides access to computers, software, audio and video cassettes, cameras, and other media. The computers are equipped with a scanner and laser printers. Microform viewing, printing equipment, and photocopiers are also available for in-library use.

- *New workspaces aimed at diverse groups.* Young children's areas in public libraries often provide soft, small chairs or large carpeted areas for storytelling. Likewise, areas for teens are designed to appeal to a younger sensibility. The San Francisco Public Library is reconstructing its facility to create a space that teenagers can enjoy. The library is adding brightly colored posters, neon signs, and a wide variety of compact discs to its teen room, which will be conveniently located near the reference material for homework activities. Public libraries are also working to accommodate the elderly or sight- and hearing-impaired patrons. These users often need computers with enlarged screens, photocopiers with large buttons, books in large print, scanning devices that can read aloud any book in the library, infrared technology that beams voice messages from different parts of the building to people carrying receivers, and "talking signs" that guide sight-impaired patrons around the library. There are many other subpopulations to serve. For example, the San Francisco Public Library is building a literacy and newcomer's center that focuses on English as a second language.

- *Reference center staffed with information consultants.* For many patrons, the reference desk is the nerve center of the public library. With the addition of computers as information tools, patrons are likely to require new services from the library staff or consultants that can help them navigate through these new electronic spaces to find the appropriate resources. The Harold Washington Library Center, for example, offers a Computer-Assisted Reference Center. It provides access to more than 800 databases—journal and newspaper articles, technical reports, conference proceedings, dissertations, government reports, and other references. Patrons can arrange to have a search conducted by the library consultant for a fee. Public libraries could arrange for information consultants to provide on-call help or private tutoring sessions to teach these navigational skills.

- *Theme rooms.* One successful bookstore chain, Barnes and Noble, offers a large variety of reading material, but many customers remember the comfortable sofas and lounging spaces created to entice them into reading (then buying) books. This same concept can be easily implemented at public libraries with limited budgets. Libraries could put a new twist on this

Public libraries should consider 24-hour access to library patrons. Such access can include dialing into the library's catalogue as well as reserving materials.

idea and create theme areas representing the different interests of the community. Rooms could be organized by color (Red room or Green room), garden setting, country (English or French room), planet (Jupiter or Venus), or Greek gods, among other interesting themes. What's important is that the patron feels comfortable in the style of furniture, color, and design of the room.

- *Language laboratory.* Today's global business environment combined with a growing emphasis on lifelong education means that many more people are interested in learning new languages. A language laboratory where patrons can check out and review audiocassettes, videocassettes, CD-ROMs, software, or other tools to learn languages can be important. This laboratory could double as a listening and viewing room for other audio or visual materials.

- *Special collections.* Libraries provide a number of special collections, depending on the interests of their communities. Some collections include Chinese history, art, California history, and so on. These collections are often hard to keep up to date. Libraries can expand them by arranging for an affinity or community group to "own" the collection. The group would consult with the library on new purchases and other items. This arrangement can also be a means for gaining additional financing if the library budget does not allow new purchases.

- *Distinctive architecture.* Public libraries should pay attention to the exterior of the building as well as the interior. A public library is perceived as a community asset and promotes an image of trust. Public libraries should ensure that the look and feel of the library, both inside and out, instills such trust. The library should be distinguished from other local institutions, like the county jail or Department of Motor Vehicles.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Redecoration or minor construction is sometimes all that is needed to update the public library's building for current and potential library patrons. In remodeling, public libraries can bring in additional phone lines and electrical supply for computers and other audiovisual devices, as well as create new workspace. This is often the least expensive option—to make incremental changes to the physical layout. But these incremental strategies can sometimes be more costly than tearing the building down and starting afresh, and incremental redesign also can be limited by the "old" physical layout.

Major reconstruction or moving to a new location allows the public library to review its current services and construct the new space to meet the needs of the 21st century patron. This option can be extremely expensive, but it can also draw the community's support.

For example, the San Francisco Library was able to rally support to get a $110 million bond measure approved in 1988. It also brought in millions of dollars from residents and affinity groups—a gay/lesbian group raised $2.6 million; African American groups gave $570,000; the Chinese Center and Chinatown gave $715,000; the local Latino/Hispanic organization gave $428,000; and San Francisco history buffs gave $886,000. In 1995, San Franciscans approved a ballot measure that doubled the library's budget and required the city to continue funding at that level for the next 15 years. New space can pay off with wider community support.

Create Multipurpose Library Spaces

Public libraries have limited funds and sometimes limited real estate. Public library spaces should be designed for multiple activities and functions. For example, meeting rooms for library staff or study sessions can be used by other community agencies and public events. Rooms set aside for telecommuters by day can be used as collaborative workspaces at night. Large auditoriums can be rented to community or noncommunity groups. Public libraries with elaborate garden settings could be rented for weddings and special occasions. This creates not only a flow of funds, but an increasing awareness of the library as an accessible community-oriented center.

Follow the Consumer

Many businesses are following the consumer and providing products and services when and where they are more convenient. Some libraries have done likewise. Stanford University Health Library offers its health collection as a branch in the Stanford Shopping Center, and the Vancouver Public Library is located in the Vancouver Mall.

Public libraries also need to offer services when consumers want them. For example, banks use 24-hour customer service centers and ATM machines to offer around-the-clock access to bank accounts and to allow customers to transfer funds, track recent checks, and process other transactions. Similarly, public libraries should consider 24-hour access to library patrons. Such access can include dialing into the library's catalogue as well as reserving materials.

At some universities, the central library is closed after midnight, but a special study section is open all night with one or two students handling security. Likewise, based on the community's needs, a portion of the library could be left open with limited security staff.

Just as supermarkets are experimenting with allowing customers to check out their own groceries, public libraries can install self-checkout systems similar to ATM machines. At USC's Leavey Library, users can check out their own books, and later they can call an automated voice response system to renew them.

For more information about organizations and services in this section, contact:

Harold Washington Library Center (HWLC)
400 South State Street
Chicago, IL 60605
URL: http://cpl.lib.uic.edu/001hwlc/001hwlc.html

Dudee Chiang
Networked Information Resources Coordinator
Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Library
The University Library
University of Southern California, mc 0182
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0182
Phone: 213-740-1207
Fax: 213-740-7713
E-mail: dchiang@calvin.usc.edu

Stanford Health Services
Stanford University Hospital
The Health Library
248 Stanford Shopping Center
Palo Alto, CA 94304
Phone: 415-725-8400/8100
Fax: 415-725-1444

Vancouver Public Library
Library Square
350 West Georgia Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 6B1
Canada
Phone: 604-665-3402

---

10. RETHINK ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

STRATEGIC CHOICES

Definition

Public libraries should think of themselves as information enterprises within a larger community. Their organizational structure should reflect how that communitywide presence is built and maintained with clearly delineated incentives for staff to achieve strategic goals and take responsibility for action steps.

WHY STRUCTURE?

California's business world is undergoing a major transformation, driven in part by the birth of a much more sophisticated California consumer who has much more purchasing discretion, wants greater choice, and has ever-changing loyalties. To respond more rapidly to this new consumer, businesses are reorganizing their physical, technical, and human infrastructures in order to gather information more effectively and to respond more quickly and flexibly. Since they are serving the same set of customers, public libraries must organize to provide some of the same rapid and flexible responses.

ACTION STEPS

Public libraries must build a flexible enterprise to meet the needs and expectations of a changing community. There are five important aspects.

Adapt to Partnerships

Collaboration with other community agencies will put strains on any organization. Different cultures, distinct work styles, and divided responsibility can bedevil any joint venture, but the biggest issue is always dealing with the unexpected.

A successful partnership involves a long period of trust-building around a common set of goals. The public library must clearly articulate its own vision, goals, and strategies , and then must work over an extended time to develop personal and institutional relationships to choose appropriate partners. Once the partnership is undertaken, the partners must work constantly to build a dialogue at the highest levels of the organizations. Only by having top management on both sides completely up to date on the details of the program can appropriate and quick decisions be made in an emergency.

Organize the World of Remote Customers

If the public library wants to develop customer contact 24 hours a day, 7 days a week—at home as well as at the library—the library must organize to support remote work. This means not only setting up appropriate technology (such as phone and e-mail message centers) but also providing quick response to questions and requests. People will use remote access in an interactive way if they can count on a personal response within a given time frame.

Use the Public Space Around the Library

Very often a public library is a recognizable building near the center of town. While this makes visits to the library convenient, it also makes the library an interesting partner for other community agencies providing health, city services, businesses, and nonprofit centers.

Public libraries should think of using any extra space available to share with other agencies who can benefit from the library's traffic flow; in turn, the library may benefit from theirs. Public libraries should investigate whether there are any zoning variations in the areas surrounding the facility that could lead to the creation of a village mall or extended service center that could benefit a number of parties. If expansion plans are possible, public libraries should think of alternate sites that could make an impact (for example, sharing space with a school or locating in a mall or near a recreation center). Traditional businesses are also thinking differently about location: Wells Fargo will have 85% of its bank branches inside supermarkets within two years.

Look to a Dispersed Staff

The entire staff of the public library doesn't always have to be in the library per se. Many innovative programs provide library services in places where potential patrons can't come to them, such as prenatal clinics or prisons. To create new customers, public libraries could also buy time from someone who works elsewhere to provide library services (for example, a camp counselor could provide daily library services to kids in a summer park or recreation program through remote terminals). At the same time, other agencies could fund a portion of a librarian to provide services for them (for example, the school district could pay a portion of a librarian's salary to provide after-school tutoring).

Such joint funding could benefit both parties and build a community network for information services that could effectively reach a much wider and more diverse audience. The problems of managing such an arrangement will not be easy—reporting structures, evaluation, and training must be considered. But the rewards from these partnerships and their value to the community will outweigh any organizational problems.

Continually Redefine the Organization

Like successful private sector firms, public libraries need to turn themselves into "learning organizations." They must have a means of getting feedback from their customers about what is and isn't working. This feedback must have a direct impact on strategy, goals, and targets, and the top management of the library must be instrumental in the periodic reevaluation of library services.

At the same time, the library needs to be constantly reevaluating its partnerships and collaborations to strengthen them and identify new ones. An effective public library will not change its programs and services every day, but will be open to new information and welcome the process of learning from its experiences with customers.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

As they are for organizations across the globe, organizational issues are of paramount importance to public libraries. It is only as public libraries adapt their organizations to achieve their goals that their vision will come to fruition.

But changing an organization is an immensely difficult task. It means not only getting people to change old habits, but also managing that change while dealing with new services, new customers, and, of course, the inevitable surprises. As public libraries work with partners, the problems are magnified—two very different organizations must change at the same pace while keeping mutual goals in place. As the focal point of the community's information network, however, public libraries may be in the best position of all community agencies to manage and direct shared change.

11. OPTIMIZE LIBRARY OPERATIONS

STRATEGIC CHOICES

Definition

To leverage existing resources to operate as efficiently as possible, a public library must make two important decisions: (1) determine what functions are unique to the library and what could be done more efficiently by external sources; and (2) identify what functions are complex enough to require the expertise of the library staff and what can be automated to save time and money.

WHY OPERATIONS?

Local public libraries in California must learn to operate within fiscal constraints. The California recession, limited city budgets, and poor fund-raising mechanisms at the local level leave libraries with little room to maneuver financially. In addition to creatively building partnerships or seeking alternative funding sources, libraries must develop strategies to leverage their current resources, which include funding, human capital, and physical space.

ACTION STEPS

Outsourcing and automation are two strategies that can help the library optimize its limited resources and leverage staff expertise. Both strategies require library staff to assess and evaluate the relevance of operations and services of the library.

Outsource Library Functions

Many companies are reevaluating the functions they perform to identify where they can save time and money by outsourcing. Functions that other businesses currently outsource range from security and food services to advertising, management information systems, payroll, and benefits management. Key points for public libraries to consider when outsourcing include the following:

- The public library must identify its core competencies—the tasks and functions that are essential to the library and that only it can perform—and devote staff time to these activities.

- Nonstrategic functions are most easily outsourced—cataloguing, collecting fines and other billing tasks, sorting and shelving, technology maintenance, marketing, and others.

- Outsourcing decisions will differ drastically from library to library. One library may never dream of outsourcing the cataloguing of rare archival material or foreign music scores while another may outsource a gift collection or backlog of titles that would consume too much on-site staff time.

- Outsourcing could have a negative impact on the culture of the organization. Functions that add a personal touch to a public library service or reflect unique expertise may get lost if contracted to an outside vendor. Careful consideration must be given to the vendor as well as the task's centrality to the public library's vision.

- Quality control must be maintained, since the error rate of outsourced tasks tends to be higher. Some librarians report careless cataloguing mistakes by vendors, for example, which in the end saves the library neither time nor money. Building a close relationship with the vendor is critical for maintaining quality standards.

- With the tremendous growth of new technologies, converting materials to new media will only become more time consuming. Outsourcing may be a way to keep up with multiple technological and media formats without disrupting the library's work flow.

Automate

Using technology to automate work tasks is another strategy for leveraging the limited time of the library staff. Not only do automated library systems make work flow more efficiently and save time, but they can also provide better information about such things as peak checkout times, the busiest hours of the day, which part of the library generates the most traffic, which does the least business, and other statistics that can help in managing the library and making future strategic decisions. Some libraries are already using such technologies.

- *The Getty Center.* The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities in Santa Monica is using a new library automation system that will consolidate the three different systems it had been using for cataloguing, circulation, and acquisitions. Its new system is well integrated, with a user-friendly graphical interface that is intuitive yet flexible enough to adapt to the center's special indexes and needs. The center's manager of automated systems says the new system allows users to access the collections much more efficiently than in the past.

- *Monterey Park Public Library.* The City of Monterey Park's Bruggemeyer Memorial Library has become the first public library to install Innovative Interface's Chinese, Japanese, and Korean language software as a part of its library automation system. This software allows users to access the library's catalogues in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, and enables staff to automatically translate OCLC records that contain Chinese, Japanese, or Korean characters. The library has about 140,000 volumes, approximately 30,000 of which are in Asian languages. The new system will help free staff to perform other duties, as well as attract more people from the community to use the library.

- *Search for innovative technologies.* New technologies are causing dramatic changes in other organizations and industries. Retail operations have turned their operational structures upside down over the last decade by using technologies that allow them to continually track inventory and sales and to automate the restocking of shelves with individually branded products. The postal system has pushed productivity rates up dramatically with automated sorting equipment that has reduced backroom labor. Variations of such technologies could change library jobs just as dramatically in years to come. Public libraries ought to be open to new ideas for using technology.

For more information about the organizations and services in this section, contact:

The Getty Center
for the History of Art
and the Humanities
401 Wilshire Boulevard,
Suite 700
Santa Monica, CA 90401-1455,
U.S.A.

Monterey City Library
625 Pacific Street
Monterey, California 93940
Phone: 408-646-3932

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

A wide range of new technologies from other industries could help public libraries leverage their limited human and financial resources. Some are technologies libraries can adapt themselves; others are best handled by outside contractors.

The risk of outsourcing or automating services and functions is the potential loss of expertise and control over those functions. If certain tasks are always outsourced, then in-house staff won't develop necessary skills, and the library will come to rely more and more on contractors. For this reason, it is important to have well-developed protocols for deciding which functions are outsourced or automated and why. The process should involve input from the entire staff to keep a balanced perspective. Top-down decisions to automate or outsource will not be well received by employees whose jobs are affected. Still, the opportunity for transforming traditional library services by using new technologies is great.

12. REDEFINE LIBRARY STAFF

STRATEGIC CHOICES

Definition

The staff, volunteers, and other affiliates working in public libraries need to embrace the transformation libraries are making to enter the 21st century. Traditional methods for recruiting, training, and deploying professional, volunteer, and affiliated staff must change to reflect the new demands of the community.

These changes should include some or all of the following: developing a more diverse staff to respond to diverse community needs, expanding recruiting strategies beyond the traditional Master of Library Science (MLS) programs, recruiting from new disciplines to support new services, offering continuing education opportunities for staff to build new skills, and incorporating customer service skills into staff training.

WHY NEW STAFF?

Local public libraries need to develop a more diverse, flexible staff that represents a broader set of skills that better match the needs of patrons. The staff of every public library should include people with skills in community outreach, marketing, customer service, collaborations, community networking, communication technologies, and space design. A good portion of the staff should also be able to use innovative technology in new ways.

By using technologies and outsourcing nonstrategic tasks, public libraries should be able to free more librarian hours from backroom activities such as cataloguing, sorting, and shelving to provide more direct, hands-on customer service. The California Library Survey showed that many Californians regard the availability of reference librarians as the most important feature of the library.

ACTION STEPS

To achieve a more flexible and diverse staff to meet the new demands of the community, public libraries ought to consider the following action steps and strategies.

Expand the Range of Professional Skills

Given the complex external environment in which public libraries must operate, staff need new competencies outside the boundaries of the traditional MLS. As customer needs change and technology provides more options for service, the traditional academic training may not be sufficient to meet new expectations. In addition to the standard coursework and practical experience provided by most MLS programs, the library should look for new hires with experience working with new user group populations, providing information services in multiple formats (electronic and traditional media), and providing customer-oriented services.

Some competencies that will be required in public libraries in the 21st century include:

- Cross-cultural communication and education
- Business communication such as marketing and public relations
- User needs evaluation
- Community building in culturally diverse settings
- Group decision making and team-building
- Group facilitation.

Working formally with information and library science departments in local universities can help define new parameters for public libraries. An

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

In training their core staff, public libraries must balance the extent to which they improve basic core skills and develop new specialized skills. Having a library staff proficient at community building and service outreach, but weak in research and information management skills, is not the best trade-off for the library in the long run. In developing new skills and seeking new hires, the library must not ignore the important traditional competencies.

exciting program whose goal is to reinvent the educational process for information and library professionals is the Coalition on Reinventing Information Science, Technology and Library Education (CRISTAL-ED) at the University of Michigan School of Information and Library Science, funded by the Kellogg Foundation. CRISTAL-ED is designing new curricula to train librarians for the libraries of the future. Prospective specializations of new training programs include:

- Community information networks and services
- Digital archives and records management
- Basic principles of information organization (printed records, images, and computer databases)
- Pilot programs in collaboration.

CRISTAL-ED is conducting several pilot projects, including the Flint Community Networking Initiative in Flint, Michigan, and the Cultural Heritage Initiative for Community Outreach (CHICO) project, both of which leverage new information technologies, involve extensive community participation, and shift the role of the library in the community. These projects model the new skills that will be important to libraries in the coming years.

Offer Continuing Education to Broaden Skill Development

Libraries need to give directors and staff opportunities to upgrade and improve their skills while on the job. As services and technologies change, librarians and other staff would benefit from opportunities to pick up skills and techniques that will help them adapt to the evolving concept of the public library.

The Association of Research Libraries Office of Management Services (ARL/OMS) provides a list of training and development courses and workshops that strengthen the management, analytical, creative, and interpersonal skills of library management and staff. They offer off-site or privately hosted training programs as well as customized on-site programs. Examples include:

- Facilitation skills
- Managing the learning process
- Facilitating change
- Women in library leadership
- Team building
- Conflict management
- Resource management
- Improving organizational communication
- Practical uses of creativity: innovation for better service
- Resource sharing through collaboration
- Effective decision making
- Advocacy skills.

Local providers of workshops or training in these areas (universities, community colleges, private consultants) may be willing to offer these services at reduced rates or pro bono.

Revise Recruiting Strategies

Libraries must reexamine their recruiting strategies to attract new hires from the broadest pool. This means casting a broad net that reaches into diverse communities—professional and ethnic—and across age groups. The composition of the library staff, including part-time and temporary workers and library volunteers, should reflect the composition of the community as much as possible. This is especially true of those who are providing face-to-face services to customers.

The ARL/OMS program also includes training in this area, including such courses as:

- Developing a library diversity program: the agenda and role of administration
- Fostering a climate in the workplace for diversity
- Implementing minority recruitment strategies
- Implementing minority retention strategies
- Assessment and design of library services for a diverse user population
- Involving staff in the development of a librarywide diversity program: programs, services, collections, committees, staff development, and planning.

Another critical focus should be young people and students. Getting junior librarians from diverse communities to work at the library will help to build early awareness of diverse needs and of the public libraries' role in diverse communities.

For more information about the organizations and services in this section, contact:

CRISTAL-ED
URL: http://www.sils.umich.edu/Publications/CRISTALED/KelloggHomePage.html

School of Information and Library Studies
The University of Michigan
304 West Hall (formerly West Engineering)
550 East University Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1092
Phone: 313-763-2285
Fax: 313-764-2475

Key contacts:
Daniel E. Atkins, Dean and CRISTAL-ED Principal Investigator
E-mail: atkins@umich.edu

Karen M. Drabenstott, Associate Professor and CRISTAL-ED Faculty Coordinator
karen.drabenstott@sils.umich.edu

ARL/OMS
URL: gopher://arl.cni.org:70/1

PART IV

PLANNING WITH A LOCAL LIBRARY: WOODLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

The goal of "California's Local Libraries: Entering the 21st Century," a strategic planning project for the California State Library, was to provide public libraries with information to help them grapple with the problems of a rapidly changing environment.

A significant part of the project was the gathering and analysis of statewide information about the public library's changing environment and the attitude of Californians toward the libraries in particular and information in general. To this end, IFTF developed and ran a statewide household survey, gathered basic data, and forecast demographic, social, and technology trends. We also conducted a series of task force meetings with technology experts and public library users to analyze the information's impacts and implications. The results are presented throughout this volume.

More critical to the public libraries was the next phase of the project: a look at the impacts and implications of the changing environment on public libraries in California. One way of doing this was to gather a group of public library leaders from around the state and discuss implications for public libraries in general. We drew on the discussions of this group, named the Library of Tomorrow Task Force, in analyzing strategic choices for all California's public libraries.

A second approach was to apply these general insights to the strategic planning process of a single public library. To this end, using all the information gathered throughout the project, IFTF conducted a detailed community-based planning process with the Woodland Public Library between April and November of 1995. In particular, we analyzed how significant changes in the California context might influence a library's strategic thinking.

What follows reports on that experience. It describes the planning process and shares the conclusions of its final report—the factors the planning committee identified as critical to Woodland and the strategic steps the committee recommended to the Library Board and the City Council.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Community

Located in Yolo County in the Central Valley near Sacramento, Woodland has a population of 43,500. It represents a fairly typical California community: the median age is the same as the state as a whole, the same share of the population is Hispanic (though fewer African Americans and Asians live there), the same share of households speak a language other than English at home, the same share of the population has been to college (although slightly less has earned a college degree), and the city's average income levels are slightly lower than the state's (but its poverty rates are lower as well).

The Woodland Public Library spends about $16 per capita and circulates about five books per year per resident. Approximately 88% of the library's funds come from local governments; the library accounts for about 4% of the city's budget. The real dollars available to support the library grew at a faster rate during the 1980s (when, like California as a whole, the community was growing rapidly) than those of the average California public library. During the California recession of the early 1990s, however, real revenues declined at a faster rate than for other public libraries.

The Process

The local coordinator of the strategic planning effort was Marie Bryan, the Director of the Woodland Public Library. Along with the Institute for the Future and the California State Library, she formed the project leadership team. The leadership team selected a 15-member Strategic Planning Committee of key stakeholders in the community—a broad range of interested citizens including staff, library users, supporters, and public officials. The Strategic Planning Committee was the principal planning agent, actively participating in every step of the project.

The Strategic Planning Committee conducted its work in nine discrete steps:

Step 1: Community Interviews. IFTF worked with the Woodland City Library staff to conduct 20 interviews with library staff and representatives of key community groups—public and school officials, business representatives, friends and users of the library, and other community representatives. The goal of the interviews was to develop a detailed list of the strengths and weaknesses of the library's current services and to identify alternative visions of the library's future.

Step 2: Library Databook. IFTF used the information from the Woodland interviews and from the state library project as a whole to prepare a databook containing a summary of the interviews and IFTF's projections of

We analyzed how significant changes in the California context might influence a library's strategic thinking.

the changing sociodemographic characteristics and patterns of technology use in California and Yolo County. Over the course of the project, other information and the conclusions of the Strategic Planning Committee were integrated into the databook, which became the record of the project and the foundation for the final report. This preliminary databook was distributed to the members of the committee before the first workshop.

Step 3: Workshop 1—Vision and Context. The Strategic Planning Committee's first workshop focused on two issues: creating a vision of the Woodland Public Library for the next ten years and analyzing how that vision fit the changing sociodemographic and technology context in Woodland and its surrounding community. The output of the first workshop was a written vision statement from each committee member and a preliminary list of key external driving forces.

Step 4: Workshop 2—Content and Vision. In the second workshop, the Strategic Planning Committee explored the impact of sociodemographic and technological changes on library services in the community. The committee also reviewed the members' vision statements and used a graphic wall chart to begin the process of creating a group vision. The output was a group vision statement of the role and function of the library in Woodland and a ranked list of the most important driving forces.

Step 5: Community Feedback. IFTF worked with the Woodland Public Library to set up methods for attracting systematic feedback from all parts of the community as the planning process moved ahead. We distributed questionnaires at the library, the local fair, and schools and to members of various community organizations. We received more than 400 responses from various segments of the Woodland community. These responses gave quick and important feedback on community interest in new types of library services. Distributing questionnaires throughout the community also raised interest in the library's plans for the future.

Step 6: Workshop 3—Strategic Choices. The third workshop began by reviewing the group's vision statement and then focused on how to achieve the vision's goals and how to meet the issues raised by the changing environment. We shared with the Strategic Planning Committee ideas generated by the Library of Tomorrow Task Force, choices made by other libraries, and feedback from the community questionnaires. We ended the session with a preliminary list of choices available for achieving the defined visions and strategic goals.

Step 7: Workshop 4—Exploring Alternate Routes. The goal of the fourth workshop was to make the vision practical. It began with a review of resource and budget limitations and explored alternatives for achieving goals by leveraging other community assets. The session ended with a list of preferred strategies.

Step 8: Workshop 5—Review a Draft Strategic Plan. The last workshop reviewed a draft plan that contained a vision statement, a description of the key issues, and a preferred set of choices for the library. The group revised the document to reflect its strategic vision and discussed steps to implement the plan.

Step 9: Final Report. IFTF prepared a spiral-bound 20-page summary report that was to be used with key constituencies and widely circulated in the community. This document included a vision statement, a brief summary of the community's input, a description of the changing environment, the outline of the vision's strategic goals with quantifiable measures of success, and the key implementation steps for mobilizing community and library resources to fulfill the vision and goals. The Library Director, in the name of the Strategic Planning Committee, presented this document to the Library Board and the Woodland City Council.

KEY OUTCOMES

The final report of the Woodland Public Library Strategic Planning Committee included the following conclusions.

Statement

The Woodland Public Library embraces the diversity of its community and provides a central resource for information, learning, recreation, and enrichment. Its broad goal is to offer opportunities for all people to participate fully in a rapidly changing world.

Key Challenges

Out of a wide range of changes in the California environment, the Strategic Planning Committee identified the ten most likely to pose critical challenges for the Woodland Public Library in the next decade. These ten challenges are at the heart of the strategic responses outlined in the last section of the plan.

- *California is losing its middle class.* The share of Californians earning between $15,000 and $50,000 in constant dollar income has fallen from 60% to 50% in the last 15 years.

- *California is multicultural.* By 2000, the share of the non-Hispanic white population will decrease to under 50% of the total.

- *Those with education get ahead in the workplace.* Increasingly, well-rewarded jobs are those that require training and education. The pay differential between college-educated young people and those with only a high school diploma has risen from 15% to 35% in the last 15 years.

- *Socioeconomic factors affect educational attainment.* Educational attainment is much lower for those who come from families with incomes under $20,000 or from families who do not speak English at home.

- *Woodland shares educational concerns with the state.* The achievement rates of Woodland schools are slightly below the state average and the dropout rate is well above the state average.

- *Californians use more information technology than others.* Californians are more likely to have home PCs than residents of other states and are 50% more likely to use the Internet.

- *Wealthier families have more home information resources.* Families with incomes over $75,000 are five times more likely to have a PC at home than families with incomes less than $20,000.

- *Fiscal support for local services is down.* During the early 1990s, constant dollar personal income in the state grew by less than 1% per year; proceeds from state taxes (in constant dollar terms) hardly grew at all.

- *Library budget is down.* Libraries in the state felt the slowdown in tax revenues very dramatically, with real dollar revenues declining in the early 1990s. Public library revenues in Woodland fell faster than the average of all public libraries.

- *Schools have trouble maintaining libraries.* California ranks last among all states in the ratio of students per librarian and is only average in providing the whole range of support services to students.

Community Wants

Information was gathered directly from Woodland residents in three different ways: a limited number of direct interviews, a random sample survey of Woodland households, and question-

The library has two goals for its technology plans: (1) to define and ensure a minimum amount of necessary access for everyone in the community to the emerging world of electronic information, and (2) to provide a range of value-added technology services to residents and local businesses.

The Woodland Public Library embraces the diversity of its community and provides a central resource for information, learning, recreation, and enrichment.

naires distributed throughout the community. Eight key conclusions were derived from the community's input:

- *Residents want to learn and build skills.* The majority of Woodland residents (including Hispanic and low-income residents) agree that learning new things is essential to success in the workplace and that computer skills are among the most essential.

- *There are wide discrepancies in access to information technologies in Woodland.* Two-thirds of Woodland residents use a computer at work and 42% have a computer at home. The rate of ownership is much lower for Hispanics and lower income households.

- *Language issues make it difficult to find information.* While only 11% of all Woodland residents "agree strongly" that they have difficulty knowing where to go for information, the rate is four times as high for Hispanic and low-income residents and six times as high for those interviewed in Spanish.

- *Woodland residents like to read.* Eighty percent of Woodland residents read a newspaper at least once a week, almost 70% read a magazine, and over 50% read a book.

- *The library is one of the favorite local services.* A majority of Woodland residents agree that they would be willing to pay more for better services from three local agencies: libraries, parks and recreation, and schools.

- *Residents use the library.* Forty-four percent of Woodland residents say they use the Woodland Public Library at least once a month or more. Hispanics and low-income groups used the library as much as the rest of the community.

- *Those less proficient in English use the library more.* Those who were interviewed in Spanish tend to use the library about 20% more than the average of the rest of the community.

- *New services could attract attention.* Over 80% of community responses to the questionnaires indicated an interest in using three types of potential new services: free programs on current events, kiosks in public places that have information about community and library events, and a service that would provide tailored information on topics of interest.

Strategies

The Woodland Public Library Strategic Planning Committee examined options for achieving the goals of its vision statement. The committee recommended taking action on five related strategies.

1. Do What We Do Even Better

The Woodland Public Library must make basic library services available to everyone in the community. This means maintaining a good reference collection, making regular purchases of up-to-date reading material, providing access to interlibrary and online services, and supporting the children's collection. It also means making the collection accessible by running a good facility, extending hours, building a Spanish language program, ensuring that the catalog is readily available, and supporting the literacy program.

2. Build Alliances With the Schools

The library will work with local organizations to deliver coordinated services to the community. The prime example would be an alliance between the library and schools. Libraries and schools have overlapping responsibilities for providing an extensive set of materials to young people, including basic research tools, and for encouraging a love of reading. It makes sense for local schools and libraries to share resources to reach children, especially with California's education budgets under pressure from constricted state revenues, rapidly rising school enrollment, and the fact that the ratio of librarians to students is the lowest of any state in the country. Joint programs can be devised to meet the developmental needs of children within the library framework.

3. Position the Library as a Community Resource

The library will provide a broad range of readily accessible information to the community by doing the following: sponsoring current event forums; becoming a community center for meetings, displays, and exhibits; keeping the Woodland community calendar; providing a central location for city agencies' information and documents; supporting the information needs of local community groups; providing wide-ranging information on local jobs, a skill bank for potential employers, and materials for upgrading skills; and building a health library.

4. Become the Community Computer Center

The library will be a key resource for information technology in the community. The library has two goals for its technology plans: (1) to define and ensure a minimum amount of necessary access for everyone in the community to the emerging world of electronic information, and (2) to provide a range of value-added technology services to residents and local businesses. The library will promote a technology center as a way to support the integration of young people into the world of 21st century information needs. Resources such as a community information center, a homework center, and a telecommuter center will be established as part of the technology center.

5. Wire the Woodland Community

The Woodland Public Library will develop the capability of remote access to library resources as a way of building stronger ties with the community. Specific steps might include a remote online card catalogue, online newspapers and journals, remote book reservations, and online reference material. The library will also cooperate with other agencies to provide interactive kiosks around town (at shopping centers, the opera house, city hall, social service agencies, health services offices, senior centers, and modular home sites, among others). These kiosks would describe library services, provide access to the library's catalogue, and facilitate the requesting of materials.

OUTCOMES

The Director of the Woodland Public Library accepted the Strategic Planning Committee's report in December 1995. The plan was approved by the Library Board.

The Woodland Public Library will develop the capability of remote access to library resources as a way of building stronger ties with the community.

APPENDIX A

METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

In order to provide California's public libraries a broad picture of the issues they will face in the next decade, IFTF utilized a broad range of research tools and processes in the course of this study.

- The state's long-term demographic, social, and technological trends were distilled from IFTF's databases and forecast for the next decade.
- A statewide survey of adult Californians' information needs, their use of tools to gather information, and their attitudes about work, learning, public access to services, and technology was developed and conducted.
- An expert panel and a task force consisting of public library directors and stakeholders from around the state were convened. These groups met with IFTF professionals throughout the project to review research findings; to gather insights filtered through members' public library, technology, public service, and information service backgrounds; to develop strategic choices; and to share visions of the future of public libraries.
- A concurrent planning process was conducted with the Woodland Public Library to show how a typical public library could weave a strategic plan based on input from IFTF's statewide study and feedback from the local community. A local strategic planning committee guided the effort.

Entering the 21st Century: California's Public Libraries Face the Future is a synthesis of the research findings and insights garnered from dialogues with each of these groups.

STATEWIDE SURVEY

The backbone of the project's primary research was the statewide survey of California households on the following topics: their information needs and uses; their technology use at home and work; their patterns of media use; their attitudes about information, public services, technology, and work; and their use of public libraries.

The goal was to provide a set of indicators describing how Californians use information and information tools. Public libraries can use these indicators to understand the context of their current and future services and their role in California communities. Given that California communities are changing demographically, socially, economically, and technologically, the survey provides a current snapshot of the state and serves as a framework for planning the future.

To conduct the survey, IFTF contracted with the Field Research Corporation in San Francisco. Field conducted a 15-minute telephone survey of 2,214 Californians age 18 years and older. The survey drew additional oversamples from Asian and African American populations in order to compare the responses of different ethnic and racial groups (Hispanic, Asian, African American, and white) and break out these groups by two household income categories—above $20,000 and below $20,000. About 70% of the sample consisted of working people, while the rest were full-time students, retirees, and homemakers. This was done so that the data would not be biased in the direction of those who tend to stay home and are more likely to be available for telephone surveys.

We also provided respondents with the option of answering the survey in their native language. The survey instrument was translated into Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese (the most widely spoken languages in California other than English) and conducted with native speakers of those languages for respondents who requested it.

Libraries of Tomorrow Task Force

IFTF worked with the California State Library to create a task force of 12 to 15 librarians from forward-thinking libraries throughout the state and community partners such as city managers and planners.

The Libraries of Tomorrow Task Force met twice during the project. The first workshop oriented the group to the project's objectives and schedule and its role as advisor and partner in identifying critical issues and articulating strategic choices.

At the end of the first meeting, the task force reviewed and prioritized a list of critical issues facing local public libraries based on a databook prepared by IFTF and containing basic demographic, economic, technological, and societal data from California. This list was used as the input for the meeting with the expert panel and helped provide a framework for synthesizing the survey data. The task force also began to generate strategic choices for libraries in the future, a task that was refined in the second task force meeting.

At the second meeting, the task force worked in small groups and in a large session to brainstorm possible action steps—concrete projects that public libraries can undertake—to create change and respond to the critical issues they face.

Members

- Marie Bryan, Library Director, Woodland Public Library
- Anne Campbell, Library Director, National City Public Library
- Steve Cisler, Senior Scientist, Apple Computer
- Arne Croce, City Manager, City of San Mateo
- Linda Crowe, Systems Director, Peninsula, South Bay Library Systems
- Yolanda Cuesta, Bureau Chief, Library Development, California State Library
- Kenneth Dowlin, Library Director, San Francisco Public Library
- June Fleming, City Manager, City of Palo Alto
- Martin Gomez, Library Director, Oakland Public Library
- Luis Herrera, Library Director, Pasadena Public Library
- Lesley Hoenecke, Architect, Snyder Langston
- Stephen Jones, President, Snyder Langston
- John Kallenberg, Library Director, Fresno County Library
- Susan Goldberg Kent, Library Director, Los Angeles Public Library
- Mary Jo Levy, Library Director, Palo Alto City Library
- Gail McGovern, Training and Development Consultant, California State Library
- Kathleen G. (K.G.) Ouye, City Librarian, San Mateo Public Library
- Amado Padilla, Professor, School of Education, Stanford University
- David Palmer, Library Director, Chula Vista Public Library
- Scott Pilchard, Vice President, Covenant Group Inc.
- Arthur Gross Schaefer, Professor, School of Business, Loyola Marymount University
- Barbara Will, Networking Coordinator, California State Library

EXPERT PANEL

To provide an outside perspective on the role of local public libraries in the future, an expert panel was convened. The panel discussed critical issues creating change in the library and information service environment and brainstormed visions of innovative public library services for the future.

The panel consisted of individuals from various backgrounds, including instructional multimedia at the high school and university levels, electronic kiosk deployment in the Silicon Valley, technology forecasting, local public libraries, health information services in diverse communities, community building, and ethnic diversity in local communities.

MEMBERS

- Kathie Blankenship, Director of Communications and External Affairs, Smart Valley
- Poncho Chang, Program Officer, Kaiser Family Foundation
- Yolanda Cuesta, Bureau Chief, Library Development, California State Library
- Chuck Darrah, Professor, Department of Anthropology, San Jose State University
- Candace Ford, Director, Library Services, Planetree Health Resource Center
- Teresa Hackler, Project Coordinator, Smart Valley
- Jay Hendee, Coordinator Technology/Media, New Haven Unified School District
- Brewster Kahle, CEO, WAIS, Inc.
- Gail McGovern, Training and Development Consultant, California State Library
- Ed McGuigan, Director, Instructional Technology, RITS/Stanford
- Doug Schuler, Independent Consultant, CPSR & Civic Practices Network
- Barbara Will, Networking Coordinator, California State Library

Given that California communities are changing demographically, socially, economically, and technologically, the survey provides a current snapshot of the state and serves as a framework for planning the future.

THE WOODLAND PILOT PLANNING PROCESS

The Woodland Public Library planning process was intended to bring the statewide data to life in the context of a typical local community. Woodland was selected by the California State Library team as a representative California community: about one-quarter of its population is Hispanic, with varying language and technology skills; it has a limited library budget (approximately 4% of the city budget); and it faces typical technology issues.

The goal of the strategic planning process for the Woodland Public Library was twofold:

- To develop a strategic plan for the Woodland Public Library that articulates a communitywide vision and is the basis for longer term budget and administrative goals.
- To provide the California State Library with an example of how a local community can use statewide resources as part of a detailed planning process.

The locus of Woodland's planning activity was the select panel of key stakeholders for the Woodland Public Library—a group of 10 to 12 key staff, users, supporters, and public officials who met periodically over six months. The panel's goal was to articulate a vision for the future of the library, explore the critical issues shaping the broader environment and the practical choices the library faces, and select the appropriate tools and resources to achieve their targets. This process is described in more detail in Part IV.

APPENDIX B

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLES

4	Table 1	Rapid Growth in People Over 65
10	Table 2	Migration During the Years of the California Recession
16	Table 3	More Education Means More Income
22	Table 4	A Large Portion of California Has Joined the Information Revolution
22	Table 5	California Leads the Country in Use of PCs
34	Table 6	Changes in California's Leading Service Industries, 1970–1995
34	Table 7	Largest and Fastest Growing Service Sectors
35	Table 8	California's High-Tech Payroll Is the Nation's Largest
35	Table 9	The Manufacturing Core in California
38	Table 10	A Large Share of Californians Work at Home
38	Table 11	People Who Work From Home Are Heavy Information Users
45	Table 12	Californians' Information Priorities
48	Table 13	Californians Use a Variety of Strategies to Obtain Information and Make Transactions
54	Table 14	Some Groups Are More Interested in Health Care Than Others
54	Table 15	Rank of Importance of Information Related to Learning Something New or Updating a Skill
56	Table 16	Information Gaps Vary by Subgroup
58	Table 17	Less Aggressive Information Seekers
58	Table 18	Those Who Do Not Use PCs Are More Likely Not to Search for Information
60	Table 19	Low-Income and Minority Groups Use Fewer Resources
63	Table 20	Computer Skills and Learning Are Priorities for Most Californians
64	Table 21	Wide Support for the Need to Increase Job Skills
64	Table 22	The Importance of Computer Skills Is Widely Acknowledged
68	Table 23	Language Capability Is an Important Component of Public Library Use
70	Table 24	There Is Potential Financial Support for the Public Library

FIGURES

E1	Figure E1	A Sample Planning Process with a Local Library
3	Figure 1	California's Gradually Slowing Population
4	Figure 2	The Baby Boomers Age
4	Figure 3	Older People Use the Public Library Less
5	Figure 4	Californians Push Eastward
6	Figure 5	Migration to California Follows the Economy
6	Figure 6	More Recent Arrivals in Local Communities
9	Figure 7	California Gets an Inordinate Share of Undocumented Immigration
10	Figure 8	Non-Hispanic Whites Tend to Be Older
11	Figure 9	The Rapid Transformation of California
11	Figure 10	Californians Who Speak a Language Other Than English at Home
11	Figure 11	Many Californians Speak Another Language at Home
11	Figure 12	Those Who Speak Other Languages Use Libraries Intensively
13	Figure 13	The Number of Births Are Up in California
14	Figure 14	Young People Are More Likely to Live in Poverty
14	Figure 15	California Is Lagging Further Behind Other States on Spending per Pupil
14	Figure 16	California's Classes Are Bigger Than Any Other State's
15	Figure 17	Librarians Have Almost Disappeared From California Schools
15	Figure 18	The Percent of Students Who Need Help With English Is Up
16	Figure 19	The Relative Earning Gap of Education Grows
17	Figure 20	More Than Half of All Young People Have Been to College
17	Figure 21	More Asians Have Completed College
18	Figure 22	Sizable Discrepancies in Dropouts by Ethnic Group
18	Figure 23	Dropout Rates Are Falling in California
21	Figure 24	The Cost of Computing Power Is Down Dramatically
22	Figure 25	California Has More Internet Traffic
23	Figure 26	PC Owners Tend to Be Rich, Educated, and White
23	Figure 27	Asians Are Infomated at Home and Work

24 Figure 28 Online Users Tend to Be Rich, Educated, and White
25 Figure 29 More Than Half of U.S. Students Use Computers in School
25 Figure 30 California Students Have More Students per PC
25 Figure 31 Minority Students Are Less Likely to Have Computers at Home
25 Figure 32 Low-Income Students Are Less Likely to Have Computers at Home
27 Figure 33 The Great California Recession
28 Figure 34 Real Take-Home Pay Is Falling
28 Figure 35 The Percent of High-Income Households in California Has Been Growing Dramatically
29 Figure 36 More Rich Live in California
29 Figure 37 The Shrinking Middle Class
30 Figure 38 Recovery in the Late 1990s
33 Figure 39 The Service Sector Is the Leading Source of Growth in California
37 Figure 40 New Jobs Require Education and Pay Well
38 Figure 41 Californians Who Work at Home Tend to Have . . .
38 Figure 42 Employees Foot the Bill
38 Figure 43 To Keep Up at My Job, I Have to Learn New Things All the Time
41 Figure 44 Real State Revenues Grew More Slowly During the Recession
42 Figure 45 Local Government Revenue Growth Is Down
42 Figure 46 Counties' Spending Priorities Get More Focused
43 Figure 47 County Sources of Revenues Shift, 1990–1994
43 Figure 48 Revenue Recovers with Personal Income
46 Figure 49 Californians' Searching Activities Run the Gamut
46 Figure 50 Heavy Information Searching Increases with Income
47 Figure 51 Heavy Information Searching Increases with Education
47 Figure 52 Heavy Information Searching Increases with Technology Experience
48 Figure 53 Californians Are Readers
49 Figure 54 Californians Who Use Alternative Media Are Heavy Information Seekers
49 Figure 55 More Californians Interact with the Private Sector for Information and Assistance
50 Figure 56 Social Service Agencies Focus on the Young, Low Income, and Minority Groups
50 Figure 57 Local Government Services Are Used Most Often by the Affluent
50 Figure 58 The Young, Educated, and Affluent Interact Most Often with Educational Institutions
51 Figure 59 The Affluent and Educated Frequently Interact with Business Professionals
51 Figure 60 Experience with Technology and Alternative Media Encourages Heavy Library Usage
53 Figure 61 Californians Search for Information
55 Figure 62 Hispanic Subgroups Have Very Different Information Needs
55 Figure 63 Asian Subgroups Have Different Information Needs
56 Figure 64 Californians with Higher Information Needs Have More Gaps
57 Figure 65 Non–Information Seekers in California
57 Figure 66 High-Income Earners Search for More Information Than Low-Income Earners
59 Figure 67 Low-Income Prefer Talking Over Reading
59 Figure 68 Navigating for Information Is More of a Problem for Some Californians
67 Figure 69 Almost Half of Californians Use the Public Library Regularly
68 Figure 70 Heavy Library Users Are Young, Educated, and Affluent
68 Figure 71 Asians and Hispanics Are the Heaviest Public Library Users
69 Figure 72 The Elderly and Those With Limited Education Are Most Likely Never to Use the Public Library
69 Figure 73 Public Library Use Is Highest in the Large Coastal Communities
70 Figure 74 Californians Think the Library Is a Good Value
70 Figure 75 Excellent Rating Is Fairly Consistent
70 Figure 76 Asians Are Less Inclined to Rate the Public Library Excellent
71 Figure 77 Affluent Are Willing to Pay More
71 Figure 78 All Ethnic Groups Are Willing to Pay
72 Figure 79 Librarians Are Considered a Key Public Library Resource

Institute for the Future
2744 Sand Hill Road
Menlo Park, California 94025
415-854-6322 • Fax: 415-854-7850

BEST COPY AVAILABLE